

Arafat arrives in France

PARIS (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat arrived Monday for a brief visit in France, during which he will hold talks with President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. Mr. Arafat, who will lunch with Mr. Chirac, is due to discuss the stalled Middle East peace process. With Mr. Jospin, Mr. Arafat will sign an agreement under which France will provide the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) with 90 million francs in aid for infrastructure and other projects. Mr. Arafat was accompanied by his main negotiator and minister of local authorities, Saeb Erekat, Abu Rudeina, his political advisor and Hani Hassan, the representative of the Fatah movement at the Socialist International.

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Algerian security forces kill 20 extremists

ALGIERS (AFP) — At least 20 armed Islamist extremists were killed in the past few days by security forces east and southeast of the Algerian capital, the daily *Al-Nahar* reported Monday. Security forces, who are still operating in the regions of Khemis El Khechna, Melah and Bouira, have seized many weapons, including assault rifles and machine-guns, the paper said. On Sunday the daily *Al Wasat* said more than 20 Islamist militants were killed by security forces in Salda, southwest of Algiers. Security forces launched an operation last Tuesday after the driver of an ambulance, a male nurse and two other people were killed in an ambush by suspected extremists while transporting medical goods, *Al Wasat* said. More than 60,000 people have died in the Algerian conflict since armed Islamist groups began fighting the military-backed regime in Algiers in 1992.

Hamas militant convicted of planning suicide attacks

BEIT EL (AFP) — In an Israeli military court Monday, military sources said, Hassan Salameh, a member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), admitted planning the attacks in February and March last year which helped derail the Middle East peace process, said the sources. The court at the West Bank military base of Beit El is due to pass sentence on Mr. Salameh next week. Military prosecutors have demanded 46 life sentences, as only those convicted of Nazi war crimes can face the death penalty in Israel. Hamas said the three attacks, including two against buses in Jerusalem, were in retaliation for the assassination of one of their military leaders in the Gaza Strip in January last year.

No visa for Israelis on way to Hong Kong

TEL AVIV (AFP) — China and Israel agreed Monday to allow Israeli tourists to enter Hong Kong without visas, officials said. The agreement, ratified just hours ahead of the handover of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, also allows Hong Kong residents to visit Israel without visas. The Chinese ambassador to Israel, Wang Changyi, and Eytan Ben Tzur, the director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, exchanged the documents of ratification of the agreement.

Saudi Arabia beheads first woman this year

RIYADH (AFP) — A woman from Niger convicted of heroin trafficking was beheaded in Saudi Arabia on Monday, the first woman to be executed in the kingdom this year, the interior ministry announced. It said the execution of Zahra Issa Ali was carried out in Jeddah, western Saudi Arabia. She was the 57th person beheaded in the conservative Gulf state so far this year. Saudi Arabia, which strictly applies the Islamic laws of Shariah, imposes the death penalty on drug smugglers, dealers and repeat users, as well as convicted rapists, murderers and armed robbers. The authorities announced 68 executions last year and a record 191 in 1995.

Prince Charles hands over Hong Kong to China after 156 years of colonialism

Combined agency dispatches

BRITAIN CLOSED the book on its once mighty empire at the stroke of midnight on Monday when heir to the throne Prince Charles handed Hong Kong back to China.

The solemn notes of the British national anthem, God Save the Queen, sounded as the clock ran out on 156 years of colonial rule and the Union flag came down for the final time over Britain's last major dependency.

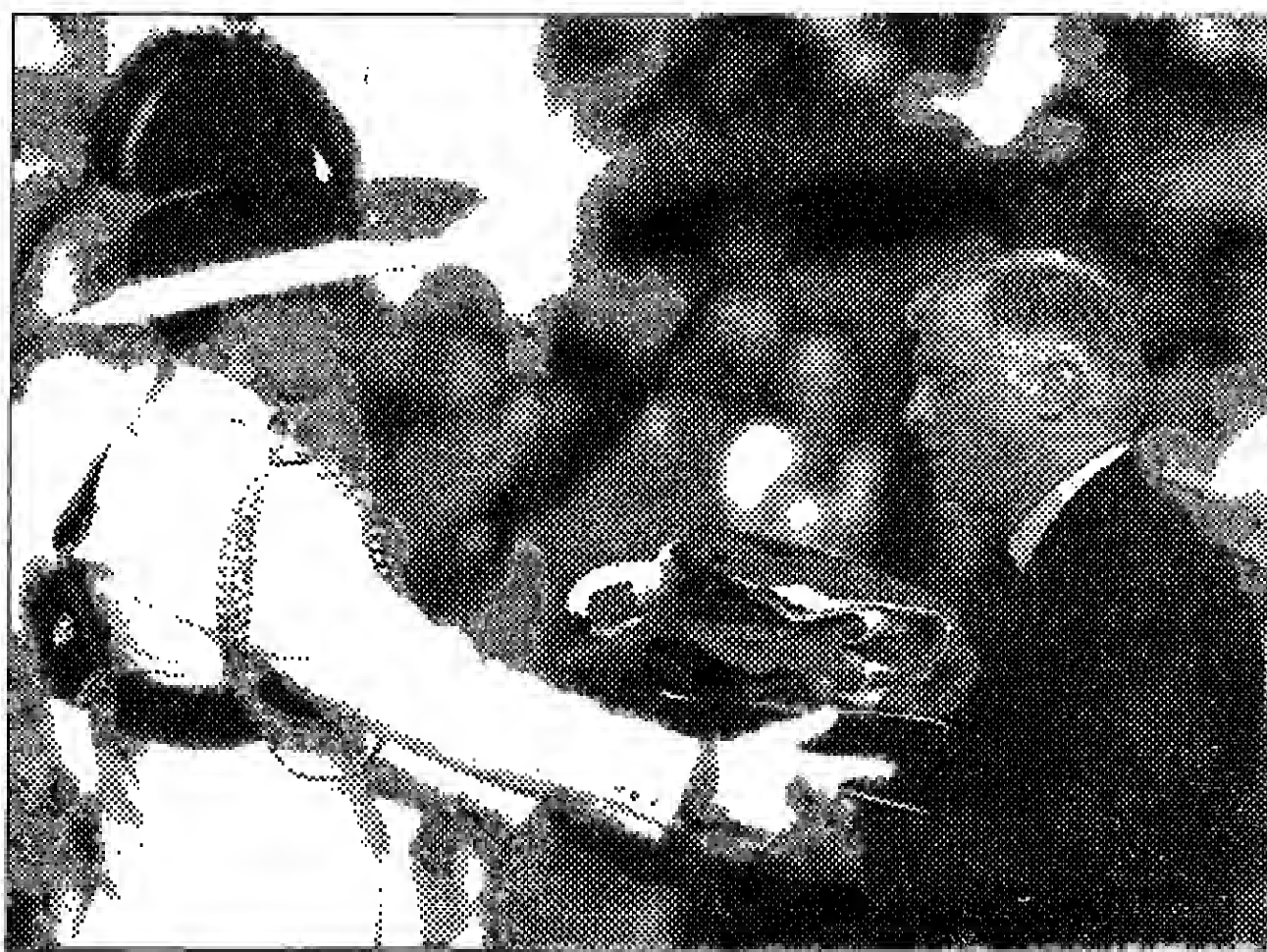
As July 1 broke, the Chinese anthem rang out, the red five-star Chinese flag was hoisted — and 6.4 million people in one of the world's most unashamedly capitalist cities fell under one of its most staunchly communist governments.

The ceremony, attended by a host of world figures including British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chinese President Jiang Zemin, was staged inside the spectacular glass-walled Convention Centre jutting into Hong Kong harbour from where Britain's 19th century colonisers first landed.

Prince Charles handed over the territory exactly half a century after his great uncle, Lord Louis Mountbatten, last viceroy of India, presided over Indian independence and the beginning of the end of the British empire.

President Jiang Zemin represented the Beijing government at the ceremony, which for China marks the end of a century and a half of humiliation at foreign hands. The historic ceremony began at 11.30 p.m. when an honour guard of British and Chinese troops marched into the Convention Centre overlooking Hong Kong's spectacular harbour.

In his speech, Prince Charles said: "I should like on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen and of the entire British people to express our thanks, admiration, affection and good wishes to all the people of Hong



Chris Patten (right), the 28th and last governor of Hong Kong receives the Union Jack flag after it was lowered while a lone bugler played the Last Post at Patten's official residence Monday. British sovereignty over the Chinese territory ended midnight Monday (AFP photo)

Kong, who have been such staunch and special friends over so many generations.

"We shall not forget you, and we shall watch with the closest interest as you embark on this new era of your remarkable history."

After Prince Charles spoke, the Union Jack and the blue colonial Hong Kong flag were lowered, and two red flags raised — that of China, and that emblazoned with the bauhinia flower, symbol of the new Special Administrative Region (SAR) of Hong Kong which came into effect at midnight.

In his speech, President Jiang told the glittering assembly: "July 1, 1997, will go down in the annals of history as a day that merits eternal memory."

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) on Tuesday triumphantly took over the defence of Hong Kong

when more than 500 Chinese troops rolled into Hong Kong three hours ahead of the midnight handover to take over British garrisons and pave the way for the entry of the main body of 4,000 PLA men at dawn Tuesday.

Hundreds of people cheered the PLA's arrival, with one group near the

border chanting "welcome, welcome" as they passed.

Hundreds more waved the Chinese flag and the post-handover flag of Hong Kong from flyovers on the route taken by the troops.

The military change of command occurred simultaneously with the midnight ceremonies marking

the switch of sovereignty. About 40 trucks and buses ferried the PLA troops, stony-faced and wearing ceremonial uniforms, past the border crossing at Lok Ma Chau in northern Hong Kong's new territories.

(Continued on page 7)

Democrat chief Lee delivers post-handover balcony address

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong Democratic Party Chief Martin Lee delivered an emotional post-handover address Tuesday to 1,500 supporters from the balcony of the legislative council building. The speech was in defiance of a ban by the new administration, here, which took power when Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule at midnight but was not due to be formally sworn in

until after 1.30 a.m. (1730 GMT).

"We are prepared to defend the freedoms we cherish," Mr. Lee said from the balcony, where he was joined by more than a dozen other democrats.

"The flame of democracy has been ignited and is burning in the hearts of our people. It will not be snuffed out."

"We say to those of you gathered here and to Hong

Kong's friends around the world — we shall return."

"Long live democracy," Other party members gave speeches after Mr. Lee. There was no sign of any attempt to prevent them.

The democrats were the largest single party in the elected legislative council which was scrapped the moment of the handover.

It will be replaced by a China-appointed body.

Yilmaz approved as prime minister, poised to win deputy confidence

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish President Suleyman Demirel Monday approved a secular government to replace the country's first Islamist-led coalition that resigned under army pressure two weeks ago.

Mesut Yilmaz became prime minister when he won enough support for a coalition of his conservative Motherland Party (ANAP), the Party of the Democratic Left (DSP) and the Party for a Democratic Turkey (DTP), the Anatolian news agency said.

"We're going to make every effort to integrate Turkey into the contemporary world," Mr. Yilmaz told a press conference later. Mr. Yilmaz's 38-member cabinet is now poised to win a parliamentary vote of confidence early next month following a wave of defections by deputies from Tansu Ciller's True Path Party, a partner in the Islamist-led government.

His government is tasked with reversing what is perceived as the country's creeping Islamisation orchestrated by the coal-

Turkish left party in early warning to Yilmaz

ANKARA (R) — A key left-wing Turkish party warned on Monday that its support for new Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's anti-Islamist coalition was not to be taken for granted.

"If this government thinks the CHP cannot withdraw support, and if it acts against the CHP, I am saying today that the CHP reaction will be very strong," Republican People's Party (CHP) senior member Ali Topuz told a news conference.

The CHP has said its 39 deputies will vote for Mr. Yilmaz's left-right coalition at a vote of confidence in the coming days. But the party, led by former Foreign Minister Deniz Baykal, disagrees with Mr. Yilmaz over the date of early elections.

Mr. Baykal wants polls to be held as soon as possible. Opinion polls put the CHP's current popularity well ahead of the 10 per cent it won in 1995.

Mr. Yilmaz told a news conference following his appointment on Monday that "negotiations on an election date will be carried out among the coalition parties."

He said no date for an election was mentioned in the coalition protocol, despite having earlier said his government would probably hold polls in early 1998.

Elections would not normally be due until the year 2000.

tion headed by outgoing Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. DSP leader Bulent Ecevit and Ismet Sezgin of the DTP will become deputy premiers, the semi-official Anatolian said.

Mr. Sezgin will also serve in the key post of defence minister, while Murat Basakcioglu (ANAP) will

Levy's row with Israel's premier holds up reshuffle

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's on-off cabinet reshuffle was thrown into confusion again Monday after a new dispute erupted with Foreign Minister David Levy.

Mr. Levy unplugged his telephone and holed himself up for several hours in his house at Beit Shean before going to Jerusalem where he announced he

would be boycotting a meeting of parliament's defence and foreign affairs committee.

He had also been scheduled to be interviewed by Israeli army radio, but the radio said he was uncontactable and was "sulking."

"There was no minister more loyal to the prime minister than me... But now

(Continued on page 7)

Palestinian man beaten by Arafat's elite guards dies

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Palestinian detainee left brain dead after being beaten by Yasser Arafat's presidential guards died of his injuries Monday, doctors at the Shifa hospital here said.

Nasser Radwan was arrested at his home in Gaza on June 23 and taken away in a car belonging to Force 17, President Arafat's presidential security force, according to the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (PHRMG).

He was taken to hospital the next morning with a fractured skull and his family was told by doctors that he was brain dead from a blow to the skull, the

human rights group said. The PHRMG said Mr. Radwan's arrest was the result of an undefined personal dispute with Mahmoud Zayed, the bodyguard of a Force 17 colonel, Abu Nasser Freihat.

Eight members of Force 17 have been arrested and Mr. Freihat has been suspended during the investigation into the incident. Since the creation of Mr. Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 1994, at least 14 Palestinians have died in its prisons, some of them by torture at the hands of security forces.

Israeli troops kill two guerrillas in Lebanon

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel said Monday its forces had killed at least two guerrillas during a clash in south Lebanon. "At least two terrorists were killed yesterday afternoon in a clash with an Israeli army force on operational activity in the central sector near the border of the south Lebanon security zone," an army spokesman said. Israel Radio said soldiers from the elite Egoz unit ambushed the guerrillas. A third guerrilla was wounded and fled together with another gunman, the radio said. Iranian-backed Hizbollah (Party of God) guerrillas are fighting to oust Israeli troops and their local militia allies from a 15-kilometre wide border zone they hold in south Lebanon. Israel set up the zone in 1985 after withdrawing the bulk of its forces following the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Saudis will boycott MENA conference — Prince Abdullah

BEIRUT (AFP) — Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz said Monday his country would boycott the Middle East economic conference scheduled to take place in Qatar in November, and called on the host country to cancel the forum.

"We told them (Qataris) that the conference will harm them. We also told them that we, and most Arabs, will not participate," the crown prince said in an interview with the *Al Safir* newspaper.

"Our Qatari brothers came to us and we advised them to cancel this conference as long as it is a source of inter-Arab conflict," he added.

Syria has been leading Arab calls for a boycott of the forum, which Israel is due to attend, because of the current impasse in the peace process.

The prince said Qatar insisted they were forced by "strong pressures" to go ahead with the forum, an apparent reference to the United States.

"We told them: You can tell whoever is exerting pressure against you that you are also facing similar pressures from the Arabs," he said.

"We still hope that the Qatari emir will abide by the demand of his brothers and tell Washington that he prefers to give up such a painful situation," he added.

He said Riyadh had "friendly" ties with the United States, but "we are the ones to know where our interests lie. We cannot put their interests before our own. We are Arabs and our interests are with the Arabs and Muslims."

Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Economic Forum Saturday to stage the fourth Middle East and North Africa Economic Conference (MENA) in Doha.

An official from the Arab League said Sunday that the conference may yet be cancelled because most Arab countries object to Israel's presence there.

Palestinians close stores to protest taxation policy

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian residents of Arab east Jerusalem shuttered their stores Sunday to observe a commercial strike in protest of Israel's taxation policy and demonstrated with placards outside the walled Old City.

The Palestinians want the city to cancel a debt of one billion shekels owed by Arab merchants in back city taxes, blaming Israel's prolonged closure of the West Bank for damaging business and reducing revenues, making it difficult for them to pay.

They also claim the municipality does not funnel the taxes back into Arab neighbourhoods, where sewage and roads are in poor condition.

"It is an unfair policy practised for many years," said Fayek Barakat, director of the Arab east Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce. "They claim that there is equality between west and east Jerusalem; in fact, our standards of living are very low."

(Continued on page 7)

Aziz says Iraq clean, attacks U.S.

NEW YORK (R) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz scorned outgoing U.N. Chief Kofi Annan's report on Iraq's weapons program, saying the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) had documented evidence Iraqi scientists were under government orders to maintain chemical weapons programmes.

Mr. Aziz, in a wide-ranging interview with Reuters, said Iraq was free of contraband weapons, and was looking toward an October sanctions review — under new UNSCOM head Richard Butler — to finally free the country from a crippling trade and oil embargo.

"No, no this charge is untrue. He (Mr. Ekeus) knows very well that all the arms have been destroyed. All the equipment related to their production and could be used for production have either been destroyed or they're under full control and monitoring by the United Nations," said Mr. Aziz.

"It is not in the interest of Iraq to keep those arms. It would be quite absurd to conceal a small amount of

proscribed weapons while our people are suffering from continuous sanctions."

"We know very well that any concealment could not last under the monitoring system, with the continuous inspections made by UNSCOM and IEA. It would be quite absurd to do that. Therefore he's (Mr. Ekeus) not correct," said Mr. Aziz.

Mr. Aziz made his charges in a New York Times interview June 25, one week before his departure to become the Swedish ambassador in Washington.

UNSCOM is the special unit charged with inspecting and monitoring Iraq for compliance with the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire prohibiting Baghdad's possession of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Aziz said Iraqi participation in the so-called "oil-for-food accord," a humanitarian exception to the broad sanctions imposed after the invasion

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Sharon-Abbas meeting initiated by Ross — report

TEL AVIV (AFP) — U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross played a key role in organising the secret meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian National Authority (PNA) second-in-command Mahmoud Abbas, the Haaretz daily reported Monday.

Mr. Abbas said that Mr. Ross had approached him about the meeting, and that once he agreed, Israeli-Arab Deputy Abdul Wahab Darwish set up the secret rendezvous at Sharon's ranch in the Negev Desert, the paper said.

According to Haaretz, Mr. Abbas began his talks with Mr. Sharon by thank-

ing him for driving PNA forces out of Lebanon in 1982 when he was defence minister, saying the move helped the peace process.

"We recognise your contribution to the peace process, as by chasing us out of Lebanon you gave us a free hand in Tunis to follow the path of the Oslo peace accords," he said.

Mr. Abbas said he understood the security concerns of Israel, but that Israelis had to understand the Palestinians' desire for their own state.

Mr. Sharon would not say whether he would accept a Palestinian state, but he pointed Mr. Abbas towards a recent article where he

said the Oslo peace accords would inevitably lead to a state and that the only question to decide was the exact nature of such a state, according to Haaretz.

Mr. Sharon also stressed Israel's need to have free access to the Jordan Valley area of the West Bank, and recognised Palestinian concern over scarce water resources.

The largest gulf between the two men was over the how much of the West Bank Israel would still control after a final peace settlement, with Mr. Sharon insisting Israel would keep around 60 per cent.

Mr. Sharon, a hawkish ex-general fiercely opposed to

the Oslo peace accords who just weeks ago was referring to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat as a war criminal, is expected to be appointed to the post of finance minister in a cabinet reshuffle.

He is also expected to be included in the inner security cabinet that handles peace process policy.

Haaretz also reported that Mr. Ross would launch a new mediation effort in the near future to unfreeze Israel-Palestinian peace talks suspended since March when Israel began construction of a new Jewish settlement in disputed Arab east Jerusalem.



ISRAELI SOLDIER FIGHTS PROTESTOR: An Israeli soldier fights with a Palestinian protester during a demonstration against Israel's settlement policy on Sunday in the Gush Katif bloc of settlements in Gaza Strip. Clashes between protesters and soldiers around Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip are mostly sparked by what Palestinians say are attempts to expand the settlements onto their land (AFP photo)

Netanyahu dumped Meridor as part of 'grand peace design'

From the Jerusalem Report

IN FORCING Finance Minister Dan Meridor's June 18 resignation, Prime Minister Netanyahu was putting in place the first element of a grand design to move the peace process forward, well-placed Likud Party sources assert.

The key element: a secret deal between Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon, where the hawkish Sharon gets the Finance Ministry he always wanted in return for a promise to help deliver the right-wing in November, when the crucial second stage of further Israeli redeployment in the West Bank falls due. The thesis is that Sharon, who has special standing in right-wing circles, can get his supporters to back peace moves they wouldn't stomach from Netanyahu or anyone else.

According to the sources, Netanyahu's new "Allon Plan-plus" blueprint for a final status deal with the Palestinians jibes precisely with Sharon's vision.

Netanyahu and Sharon met a day before Meridor's resignation and agreed on the details of the deal. And in a TV interview after he'd effectively forced Meridor out — ostensibly over a minor change in foreign exchange-rate policy — Netanyahu almost gave the game away. He insisted that the moderate Meridor's departure would not complicate the process with the Palestinians, saying: "Politics some-

times works in paradoxical ways, and sometimes moves have the opposite result to what most people expect."

Netanyahu, bent on reelection in 2000, needs progress on the peace front to keep Labour rival Ehud Barak from winning the electoral middle ground. The prime minister's problem is that the batchet job on the widely respected Meridor has triggered deep antagonism inside his coalition. He may have even set off a dynamic that could lead to its collapse.

Not only has Meridor now declared that he has lost confidence in the prime minister, and will look for another party if Netanyahu is the Likud candidate in the next elections, but the last Likud prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, has also been scathingly critical. And David Magen, who recently quit as deputy finance minister, predicts that the demise of the government is near, telling The Report of the "growing impatience with Netanyahu among most of the ministers."

Trade Minister Nathan Sharansky says his Yisrael ba-Aliya party already has one foot outside the coalition. And there is some early election talk in the Third Way Party too. Still, Likud veteran Reuven Rivlin insists the minor parties dare not trigger an election. "They can all scream their heads off," he says, "but they know that, when they destroy Netanyahu, they'll destroy themselves."

PNA police release Islamic Jihad leader for lack of evidence

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian police have released a leader of the Palestinian radical group Islamic Jihad after three months behind bars, Islamic Jihad sources here said Monday.

Mohammad Hindi, an Islamic Jihad political activist in the Gaza Strip, was freed Saturday, the sources said.

He was arrested in April during a sweep by the Palestinian security forces against Islamist fundamentalists following a suicide bombing in a Tel Aviv cafe which left three Israelis dead and two other abortive bombings.

Mr. Hindi, who has been detained several times by the Palestinian authorities since 1994, was released after an investigation failed to turn up any evidence against him, the sources

said. Last month, President Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA) released some 15 Islamic Jihad activists arrested in April.

Some 25 Islamic Jihad militants and 70 members of the hardline Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) remain behind bars in Gaza, according to sources close to fundamentalist groups.

On Sunday, the parents of several dozen detainees held a protest sit-in outside the headquarters of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza to demand the release of their relatives.

Islamic Jihad and Hamas oppose the autonomy agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

Libya seizes Japanese fishing boat

TOKYO (AFP) — A Libyan court has ordered the seizure of a Japanese tuna fishing boat, slapping fines of 2,000 dinar on crew members, Japan's Foreign Ministry said Monday.

According to the court indictment, the Japanese boat Ryoei Maru No. 11 violated the territorial waters of Libya and illegally collected marine products in May, said an official for the ministry.

The court slapped the fine on each of 22 crew members except a chief fisherman, Takio Nakazawa, 53, who was put on a separate trial.

The verdict for Mr. Nakazawa will be delivered Tuesday. Libyan authorities seized the boat on May 7 and notified the Japanese embassy there on June 3.

Pro-Syrian candidates, opposition figure win Lebanon by-elections

BEIRUT (AFP) — Two candidates of the pro-Syrian regime and an opposition figure won back their parliamentary seats in by-elections held after voting irregularities were ruled to have occurred during last year's legislative polls, officials said Monday.

Interior Minister Michel Murr said the opposition candidate, Christian Maronite Emile Nauraf, secured 15,083 votes in Sunday's vote in the tiny region of Jbeil, north of Beirut, where 54 per cent of the 64,000 electors turned out.

His rival, Nazem Khoury who was backed by Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon, won 35,000 votes, beating his rival Camille Mrad by 31,000 votes.

Mr. Murr also disclosed preliminary results for north Lebanon by-elections that showed a victory for Culture Minister Fawzi Hobeish, a Maronite, and his ally Khaled Daher, a member of the Sunni Muslim fundamentalist group Jamaa Islamiya.

The interior minister confirmed late Sunday that only 22 per cent of the 600,000 voters in north Lebanon took part in the by-elections, compared to 40 per cent in last year's legislative polls.

Mr. Murr said Mr. Hobeish won some 82,000 votes against 42,000 for his rival Mikhail Daher. Khaled Daher secured 55,000 votes, beating his rival Camille Mrad by 31,000 votes.

Official results were expected to be announced later Monday.

Lebanon's Constitutional Court ordered new elections for the three seats after ruling that candidates had been elected through counting errors and that unfair pressure had been put on voters in some areas.

The court also invalidated the seat of Henri Shehid, a Maronite Christian from the western Bekaa Valley in southeast Lebanon, but no by-elections were held there after he backed out of the race, abandoned by his Syrian allies.

His rival, former Minister Robert Ghannem took over the seat.

Bahrain says detained Shiite cleric died of natural causes

MANAMA (AFP) — Bahraini authorities Monday denied opposition charges that a Shiite Muslim cleric was murdered in prison, insisting he died of natural causes.

The cleric had been "suffering for some time from respiratory problems and he died of natural causes, as certified in the medical report and death certificate," an Interior Ministry spokesman said.

But an exiled opposition group, the Bahrain Freedom Movement, accused the authorities Sunday of having "killed Sheikh Ali Al Nachas, a blind person

about 50 years old."

Police had to break up a protest march of several dozen people in a village near Manama after news of the cleric's death spread, an inhabitant said.

"The security forces managed to disperse the crowd after an hour or so without clashes taking place," the witness said. Inhabitants said police helicopters flew over the village Sunday.

The cleric was sentenced to a year in prison in January 1996 for delivering political sermons in mosques, the London-based Bahrain Freedom

Movement said, in a statement received in Nicosia.

Shortly after his release he was detained again on the same charge, it said, accusing prison officials of maltreatment and police of breaking into his family home and beating his wife.

At least 31 people have died in unrest in Bahrain since December 1994.

The unrest is spearheaded by Shiites demanding the restoration of parliament dissolved in 1975 by the Sunni Muslim-led authorities and the release of all political prisoners.

'Uday kills guard'

DUBAI (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, the target of assassins' bullets in December, has shot dead one of his guards since leaving hospital earlier this month, the opposition charged Monday.

The Iraqi National Congress (INC) also said that Uday, 33, was still unable to walk.

"Uday is displaying symptoms of violent depression. He shot and killed one of his guards with a .357 Magnum revolver during one of his tirades," the London-based INC said in a statement received here.

It named the guard as Kamil Mahmoud Sabah Janabi and said he lived in Tikrit, the president's home town, but it did not give a date for the incident. In 1988, Uday was briefly jailed for killing an

aide to his father, Kamal Hanna Jejo, whom he accused as serving as go-between for President Saddam and a new woman in his life.

The INC said Uday, who has been operated on by foreign doctors, was still unable to walk. "The danger of amputation of part of the left leg is still looming," it said.

The president's son left hospital June 9, six months after gunmen sprayed his car with bullets in the centre of Baghdad Dec. 12. Iraqi officials said he made a "full recovery" although he appeared on crutches.

Iraqi authorities have announced no arrests in the assassination bid, while Uday has pointed a finger at Iran, which fought an eight-year war against Iraq during the 1980s.

Iran to release sturgeon to save caviar

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran is to release 20 million sturgeon fry into the Caspian Sea this year in a bid to boost its sinking caviar production, newspapers reported Monday.

Russul Lahidjanian, director of the National Fishing Company, said the figure was eight million sturgeon higher than last year.

Iran's caviar production has been falling steadily in the past few years because of growing pollution and excessive fishing in the Caspian, the world's biggest caviar-producing region.

Iran's annual caviar output reached 160 tonnes in the early 1990s but it can now only produce 130 tonnes of the expensive delicacy a year.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
14:30 Holy Quran
15:40 Sports
16:00 Quarter-Finals Ladies Tennis From Wimbledon
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Coach
21:00 Till
21:30 Encounter
21:40 Doc. - Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:30 West Beach
23:15 Drug Wars

PRAYER TIMES

03:54 Fajr
05:29 Sunrise/Duha
12:39 Dhuhr
16:21 Asr
19:50 Maghrib
21:25 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilieh. Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 5516245
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative warm weather conditions will prevail with winds

northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot and dusty, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Amman 21/53
Aqaba 36/40
Deserts 20/36
Jordan Valley 34/40

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 33, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Wisam Bazzay 748563
Dr. Mukhlis Mazharah 839425
Dr. Munther Al Qazmi 779690
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib 620115
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy 71111
ZARQA:
Dr. Salah Al Safarini 987565
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 657111
Civil Defence Dept 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 657777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661161

Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 0853200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200
HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664281/6
Al-Khaleel Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 607227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Ittihad, Al-Muhajirun 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT
ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:05 Sanaa (RJ)
08:05 Damascus (RJ)
09:35 Doha (add) (RJ)
10:15 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
10:25 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 Bahrain (add) (RJ)
10:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights
09:00 Cairo (MS)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
16:40 Istanbul (TK)
18:05 Kiev (LU)
19:15 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
21:30 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:50 Aden (YY)
23:35 Larnaca (CY)
23:45 Amsterdam (KL)
01:25 Jakarta (GA)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
04:25 London (BA)
DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
09:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:50 Bahrain (add) (RJ)
12:15 Amsterdam, Montreal

Toronto (RJ)
12:25 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
13:00 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:15 Cairo (RJ)
14:05 London (RJ)
14:05 Madrid (RJ)
18:45 Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)
19:00 Tunis (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
21:40 Damascus (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:25 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
22:25 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)

Other Flights
04:30 Riyadh (SV)
10:00 Cairo (MS)
17:40 Istanbul (TK)
19:05 Kiev (LU)
20:15 Dubai (EK)
22:50 Tel Aviv (LY)
23:50 Aden (YY)
01:55 Bucharest (RO)
02:25 London (GA)
02:30 Amsterdam (KL)
04:00 Athens (GA)
04:00 Rome (AZ)
04:00 Rome (AZ)

Seminar proffers electoral advice for women

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) in cooperation with the European Union (EU), held a seminar in Amman yesterday entitled "Problems which face women candidates."

Approximately thirty women, expecting to participate in the 1997 parliamentary elections, attended the one-day seminar, according to a Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) statement.

Yahya Shahadeh, a researcher in the University of Jordan Centre for Strategic Studies, presented a paper in which he discussed some of the main obstacles which might negatively impact candidates' chances of winning elections.

These obstacles, he said, include a weak sense of self-confidence, a distrust which sometimes permeates women's relationships with each other, ignorance of the dynamics of the electoral process, masculine influence over women's decisions, the traditional role of women within the family, and certain existing tribal traditions.

Mr. Shahadeh also faulted the media for failing to efficiently highlight the importance of women's



Potential candidates for this year's parliamentary elections participate in a seminar offering timely advice on the electoral system (Petra photo)

roles, according to the statement. Public awareness of women's roles and capabilities is still insufficient, he said.

A lack of financial independence and poverty in certain cases, in addition to many other procedural obstacles, can hinder a woman's electoral performance, Mr. Shahadeh added.

Dr. Amal Sudqi, an Egyptian expert in women's

affairs, presented a paper on ways in which a candidate might develop a successful campaign message, the statement said.

She described the main themes of the candidate's campaign as determined by three main factors, namely the candidate's personality, knowledge of his/her constituency's concerns, and the dynamics of the campaign, including the political climate, competition, and coalitions.

Monday's meeting was one in a series of seminars, workshops, and training sessions held within the framework of a joint project implemented by the JNCW, the Jordanian National Forum for Women, and Princess Basma Women's Resource Centre in cooperation with the EU to promote women's participation in political life and the democratic process in Jordan, the statement concluded.

Germany offers plans for renovation of water networks in Greater Amman

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation Monday received three major reports from Germany covering the water supply situation in the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) as part of the Kingdom's broader plan to renovate water networks.

According to Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin, the three-volume study was developed over a time period of several years to support the amelioration of water networks in the Greater Amman Municipality.

"The replacement, the rehabilitation of the old networks in the greater Amman area, has been a priority for the Water Authority," Dr. Haddadin said, during a ceremony attended by the German Ambassador to Jordan Peter Mende.

"Not all of the water actually pumped is delivered to Amman," the minister said. "The amount of water for which we receive revenue does not exceed 46 per cent of the total on average."

This means that water is lost and unaccounted for, he added.

Dr. Haddadin described

the \$1.6 million study, financed by Germany, as crystallising methods in which the networks could optimally function as well as their design and feasible work schedule.

"Currently, well water is directly pumped from the water network, and yet consultants maintain that this might not be the most efficient manner," Dr. Haddadin explained. "This sort of pumping leads to more leakage, more breakage and more water loss."

"A widely-used system in this age is to pump water from the source to a reservoir — and from elevated reservoirs, water more easily flows to the consumer," he maintained.

"Therefore, one can better control pressure, promoting efficacy in the water networks," the minister said. "The consultants' judgement as to exactly which parts of the networks should be replaced or repaired have been put in this presentation and will be the defining point of the work."

Dr. Haddadin explained that, according to the study, Amman will be divided into minutely designed zones.

This scheme will be presented to donors, "so that they might allocate loans to finance the construction of

all of these smaller components," he said.

According to Dr. Haddadin, the ministry has begun construction of the JD 200 million project to renovate the water networks in the entire Kingdom.

"We are ready to complete two regions in which the networks have been replaced," the minister stated. "The replacement of old pipes has been [completed in certain areas]."

"The operation is not a picnic, [rather] it is like post-surgery," he added.

After the study has been finalised, the ministry will seek consulting firms to design the networks and zones as delineated in the report.

Dr. Haddadin denied news reports which accused Germany of linking financial support to the Kingdom's decision to raise the tariff of water used for irrigation purposes.

Any rise in water costs is directly linked to the Economic Restructuring Adjustment Programme which the Kingdom signed with the World Bank in 1992, he said.

"A major theme in that programme is the removal of distortions as are often brought about through subsidies of consumer goods,"

Dr. Haddadin asserted. "Bread is one example and water another. These subsidies and [restrictions] are not healthy to a free economy."

Therefore, recommendations were made to the government which were accepted, he added.

"Among these measures was the removal of distortions in the water market," the minister affirmed. "We have striven towards this goal in municipal and urban water sites."

"The ministry is working to remove subsidies by reducing service costs that the consumers, in this case the farmers, must operational and maintenance charges," he said.

German Ambassador to Jordan Peter Mende affirmed that Germany is concentrating on the water sector as it considers this area a major difficulty for the Kingdom.

"We have ongoing programmes for the coming years and we have signed other matters [related to] German financial cooperation," Mr. Mende concluded. "We are pleased to see that other major donors [are following suit] so that there is a bright future for the residents of Amman regarding water issues."

Khreisha meets with Mafraq farmers

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha Monday stressed the government's interest in extending assistance to facilitate farmers' profitable marketing of their products.

During a meeting with Mafraq farmers, Mr. Khreisha heard the farmers' various agricultural complaints as well as their demand for constructing a tomato paste plant in the Sabha region.

The ministry will ease the

suffering of all Jordanian farmers, the minister asserted, particularly those in the Mafraq governorate whose products were adversely affected by frost this year.

He affirmed that the ministry's would provide farmers with equipment and agricultural extension services.

The meeting was attended by Ministry Secretary General Hashem Sboul and other ministry officials.

Majali visits NRA

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday visited the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) to meet with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Mohammad Saleh Horani as well as the NRA director general and his senior assistants.

The premier was briefed on projects underway for the exploration of mineral resources.

He requested that the NRA take measures to address rough topography in certain areas which, at one time, served as stone quarries.

Dr. Majali affirmed the importance of consistent environmental protection.

The prime minister emphasised the need for the NRA to maintain strong contacts with other countries and firms which boast experience in prospecting for oil and other natural resources.

Vocational training enrollment increases

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education Monday announced that in the upcoming school year, scheduled to commence by the end of August, comprehensive schools will admit 25,740 students to be trained in various trades.

A comprehensive school is one in which students are trained in trades in addition to academic courses. Classrooms are expressly equipped for vocational training.

Director General of the Ministry of Education Vocational Training Department Mustafa Obeid explained that these comprehensive schools will admit 43 per cent of all male and 25 per cent of all female students registered in their first secondary class to vocational classes. This, he affirmed, is an increase of two per cent over the number of students who took vocational training last year.

Mr. Obeid stated that the increase in male and female students registered for vocational courses conforms to ministry plans to gradually raise the number of students enrolled in vocational training by the year 2000 to 50 and 35 per cent respectively.

He described the ministry's 289 comprehensive schools as offering industrial, agricultural, nursing, hotel management and domestic sciences training.

However, he affirmed that the ministry is in the process of expanding comprehensive school services by introducing courses covering other trades in regular academic schools, varying in accordance with the needs of the Jordanian labour market.

In order that the students be trained in trades conforming to actual labour market needs, the ministry is joining with 127 private and public sector institutions to provide additional on-site training.

Mr. Obeid affirmed that his department has developed plans in conjunction with the Employment and Development Fund (EDF) to loan graduates up to JD 10,000 to enable them to start small private businesses.

According to Mr. Obeid, the ministry is advancing plans to form a central committee to increase trade awareness among young students.

He said that the committee will comprise representatives of the Vocational Training Corporation, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the Jordan Armed Forces, the Chambers of Industry and Trade and the media.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FRENCH-ARAB FILM FESTIVAL

* "Machado" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Silver Jewelry exhibition" will be held at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, June 20th - July 20th.

* Karam Rasin's works will be displayed at Orient Gallery, June 24 - July 10.

* Paintings by contemporary Iraqi artists entitled "Ecology and Environment in Iraqi Art" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until July 12 (except Tuesdays).

* Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition, shows work of 60 Arab artists, until July 24 at Darat Al-Funon, Jabal Wehdat.

Weather slightly hotter than average

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Meteorology Monday forecast relatively hot weather for Tuesday and Wednesday.

In the nation's capital, the temperature will rise in 33 degrees Celsius during the day and drop to 21 degrees at night, according to a department official.

Temperatures have been slightly higher than average at this time of the year, accompanied by southwesterly winds and dust, he said.

In Aqaba, the weather will be hot with seas calm.

Temperatures in the Gulf of Aqaba will reach 40 degrees Celsius during the day and drop to 26 degrees at night.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lower House petitions for refugees

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Monday beseeched international, Islamic and Arab communities to oppose Israeli attempts to deprive Palestinian refugees of human rights. In a communique issued today, the committee called for improving the refugees' livelihoods and educational and environmental conditions.

Americans visit RSS

AMMAN (Petra) — An American cultural delegation Monday visited the Royal Scientific Society (RSS). Members of the delegation were briefed by RSS President Said Aloush on the society's activities and programmes which aim at developing the local community. The delegation toured the RSS and studied developmental projects.

PSD receives U.N. delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department (PSD) Director General Nasouh Muhieddin Monday received a U.N. delegation to study the department's training programmes.

Agricultural workshop concludes

JERASH (Petra) — An agricultural workshop concluded here today during which obstacles facing agriculture were discussed. The workshop was organised by the Jerash Agricultural Directorate.

JUST medical students graduate

RAMTHA (Petra) — Fifty-one medical students from the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) took their Hippocratic Oath Monday upon graduation. College of Medicine Dean Ibrahim Bani Hani congratulated the students and College of Medicine Assistant Dean Ziad Naser described the university as playing a vital role in shaping future generations.

Prime minister explains regional situation to youth

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday detailed the general situation in the Middle East as well as current developments in the peace process to a young group of Jordanians working and living abroad.

Peace has become a global strategic option, he emphasised.

The Palestinian cause is rapidly gaining global support and Palestinian achievements heretofore accomplished will enable the Palestinians to construct their independent state on their national soil, Dr. Majali affirmed.

He clarified the economic situation in Jordan as well as government measures to encourage and promote investments.

The group is presently participating in an annual youth activities congress.

The government has been encouraging young Jordanians to study trades and manual work (see related story) as an essential element for a strong economy and in order to reduce dependence on guest workers.

The prime minister described Jordan's support for strengthening relations among Arab countries as a principled stand.

The meeting, attended by Minister of Culture and Youth Qassem Abu Ein, was convened at Al Hussein Sports City.

The youth group also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayed Tarawneh, who explained that, although Jordanian embassies abroad are entrusted with providing



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday details the general situation in the Middle East as well as current developments in the peace process to a young group of Jordanians working and living abroad (Petra photo)

services to expatriate Jordanians, such services are sometimes limited as is the case with the Embassy of Jordan in Washington DC which must respond to the needs of Jordanians living in 35 states.

Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri attended the session and answered questions related to school-

ing. Also Monday, the youth group visited Al Hassan Industrial Estates near the northern city of Ramtha, which houses 55 factories with a combined invested capital of JD 70 million.

Estate Director Walid Hijazi gave a briefing on factory products and stated that a total of 2,000 workers labour in the estates.

'National economic growth rate expected to reach 6.5%

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Senate Finance Committee held its biannual meeting Monday and announced that this year's national economic growth rate is expected to reach 6.5 per cent.

Subsequent to the meeting, committee Rapporteur Kamal Shaer confirmed that the 1997 fiscal budget deficit remains at four per cent in terms of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while the general price index will rise by 4.3 per cent.

The 1997 fiscal budget, ratified by Parliament in December of last year, envisaged a 3.9 per cent deficit, excluding probable foreign assistance, a number which reflects an 11.1 per cent increase over the 1996 fiscal budget.

The deficit has been calculated at approximately JD 56 million as delineated in the budget, endorsed by Parliament and ratified by Royal Decree.

The budget revealed total revenues of JD 1,860 million and expenditures of JD 1,916 million.

According to Dr. Shaer, the meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani, Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf, Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez, Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki, Minister of

Labour Saleb Khasawneh, Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan Ziyad Fariz, Social Security Corporation (SSC) directors and the director of the budget department.

The biannual meeting is held in order to review the government's financial performance, the balance of payment of current accounts and the state's monetary policy, he added.

Committee members also examined economic draft laws to be issued in the course of implementing government-sponsored economic reforms. These, he said, include draft laws stipulating the protection of national production, the industrial estates, investment funds, preventing intellectual property rights monopolies and copyrights.

The committee, Dr. Khasawneh and the SSC director general discussed the corporation's general revenues and expenses both in 1995 and 1996 as well as projected plans for guaranteeing sufficient funds to meet corporation obligations.

According to Dr. Shaer, while financial transfers from Jordanian expatriates to Jordan increased, the volume of imports declined — a situation, he said, which supplied foreign currency reserves to central bank deposits which now top \$1 billion.

Expressing his belief that bank

reserves would further increase by the end of this year, Dr. Shaer maintained that this trend is strengthening the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar and improving the country's balance of payments.

During the meeting, the committee also discussed the new central bank policy of issuing government bonds and Dr. Shaer voiced support for this policy which, he said, aims at encouraging Jordanians to buy bonds thus increasing liquidity in the market for further investments.

The committee also stated its support for the central bank's announcement Sunday stipulating the full liberalisation of foreign exchange transactions in Jordan.

This allows both citizens and non-citizens the freedom to purchase or sell any amount of Jordanian or foreign currency and gold in order to promote investment in the country, Dr. Shaer explained.

The committee also studied the government's social safety net plan, slated to benefit the indigent and improve service infrastructures in refugee camps.

According to Dr. Shaer, the committee heard a briefing regarding the government's ongoing negotiations with the European Union (EU) on the question of partnership and entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Negotiations begin despite fighting in Afghanistan

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's Islamic Taliban militia and opposition forces were fighting around the northern Afghan capital of Kunduz Monday but new negotiations have started, a spokesman said.

"Representatives of the people have been shuttling back and forth between Kunduz and Taloqan for talks," anti-Taliban alliance spokesman Abdullah told AFP in Kabul by satellite telephone.

Kunduz City, 340 kilometres north of Kabul, was under the control of renegade local commanders who defected to the Taliban. Despite negotiations, they remain in defiance of opposition calls for surrender.

Abdullah said a delegation representing the commander who defected to the Taliban, Arif Khan, had been visiting opposition

headquarters in the Takhar provincial capital Taloqan, some 70 kilometres east of Kunduz.

Arif Khan mutinied two weeks ago against ex-President Burhanuddin Rabbani, who is based in Taloqan since being ousted from Kabul by the Taliban in September 1996.

Although there has been no major battle for Kunduz, Abdullah said skirmishes continued between the Taliban and the forces of Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, Mr. Rabbani's military leader.

"Yesterday we clashed with a Taliban convoy which left Kunduz airport on a patrol to the east," Abdullah said.

"It seemed to be an accidental encounter, not a planned attack by the Taliban," he said, claiming opposition troops destroyed four Taliban pickup trucks

and a mobile anti-aircraft cannon.

Negotiations were also being held in Baghlan City, 75 kilometres south of Kunduz, between pro-Taliban Commander Bashir and representatives of opposition forces under ethnic Uzbek General Abdul Malik, the spokesman said.

Former Afghan President Sibghatullah Mojadeddi left Pakistan Monday for Afghanistan to try to mediate between the Taliban and Gen. Malik, Afghan forces said.

Mr. Mojadeddi will travel to Gen. Malik's northern stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said.

He hopes to arrange a ceasefire and exchange of prisoners, the Pakistan-based Private Information Service said.

AIP quoted unidentified Taliban sources as saying

the Islamic militia supported Mr. Mojadeddi's mediation efforts but would agree to a ceasefire only after an exchange of prisoners was arranged.

The Taliban movement is keen to secure the release of its leaders and soldiers taken prisoner by Gen. Malik's forces in Mazar-i-Sharif in May. The prisoners include some key Taliban leaders including former Foreign Minister Mullah Mohammad Ghaus.

Hundreds of Islamic militiamen were killed in Mazar-i-Sharif in heavy fighting as Gen. Malik's forces drove the Islamic militia out after having helped them take the city in a pro-Taliban revolt that sent Uzbek warlord Abdul Rasid Dostum fleeing into exile.

Gen. Malik then took Gen. Dostum's former command.

Sri Lankan troops hit rebels with artillery

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan troops fired on Tamil Tiger rebel positions near a northern town with artillery Monday, forcing the separatists to withdraw with their wounded, the Defence Ministry said.

A ministry statement said troops saw rebel movements in the general area of northern Puliyanakulam and attacked.

"Ground troops confirm terrorists fleeing northward carrying their wounded," the statement said.

It added that troops Monday were consolidating and dominating areas ahead of their defences, after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) staged a massive attack on one of their flanks last week.

The LTTE's spokesman in London was not immediately

available for comment.

The army's advance into the LTTE's northern stronghold has been slowed by two rebel attacks in as many weeks on the advancing troops' tail, which have left scores of soldiers and rebels dead.

The military launched operation "Java Sikuru" or Sure Of Victory, last month in a bid to open a highway from the government-controlled front-line town of Vavuniya to the Jaffna Peninsula, a further 100 kilometres north.

Vavuniya lies 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo. Puliyanakulam lies further north.

The Independent Island newspaper said Saturday that the army, which suffered almost 300 casualties this month, had temporarily

called off the operation.

The Defence Ministry statement said the operation was continuing.

On Saturday, the navy sank four rebel boats off the eastern coast of Trincomalee, 260 kilometres from Colombo, killing at least 40 rebels, a naval spokesman said.

He said the boats were carrying arms and food supplies to rebels in the Wanni.

The LTTE are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in mainly Sinhalese Sri Lanka's north and east.

The government says more than 50,000 people have been killed in the war, now in its 14th year. The LTTE say the toll is higher.

Independent confirmation of events is not possible because journalists are not allowed in the war zone.

Menem 'knew nothing of' reported deal on Falklands

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — President Carlos Menem told the state-run Radio Estatal Sunday that he knew nothing of a reported 1982 deal under which Britain agreed to turn over the disputed Falkland Islands to Argentina.

Mr. Menem's comments came after a weekly publication here cited former U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig as saying London agreed to a deal shortly before Argentina and Britain fought a war over the South Atlantic archipelago.

The British-ruled islands — which Buenos Aires calls the Malvinas and considers part of its national territory — would have come under Argentine control after a 15-year transition period, Mr. Haig told Tiempos Del Mundo.

Mr. Haig — who served as intermediary between the two nations during the 1982 crisis — told the weekly that the islands would have flown the British, Argentine and U.N. flags during the transition, which would have ended this year.

Mr. Haig said then-Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde Terry's proposal "came too late," explaining that after Britain sank the Argentine warship General Belgrano the military junta that controlled Argentina rejected the deal.

"I don't know anything about it, but if Haig says so it's because there was something there," said Mr. Menem, who has made recovering control of the wind-swept islands — under British control since 1833 — a foreign policy priority.

Mr. Menem recently welcomed the July 1 handover of Hong Kong to Beijing as a good omen and suggested that Britain and Argentina could reach a similar deal on the archipelago, adding he had consulted U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan on the issue.

Following an invasion launched by Argentina's then-military rulers, the two countries went to war over the islands in 1982. In June of that year, Britain expelled the Argentine forces after fighting that left about 1,000 dead and thousands injured on both sides.

Deputy Foreign Minister Andres Cisneros recently said Argentina could consider a "one country, two cultures" course of action under which the islands would change hands but Buenos Aires would respect the islanders' religion, language and traditions.



Worshippers carry out the body of one of four people shot dead by unidentified attackers at the Hilal Mosque in the Pakistani city of Lahore, capital of Punjab province. Police said the attack was part of a series of killings involving Sunni and Shiite Muslim militants in Pakistan (Reuters photo)

Pakistani police on high alert after mosque attack leaves four dead

LAHORE (AFP) — Pakistani police were on high alert here Monday after gunmen killed four worshippers and injured half a dozen others, heightening sectarian tensions.

Two unidentified assailants raided a Sunni mosque in Lahore, capital of Punjab province, late Sunday in apparent retaliation against the killing of an activist of the Shiite militant group in the city.

Witnesses said about 200 people were at evening prayers when two gunmen raided the Al Hilal Mosque and fled the scene.

Among the victims was the prayer leader of the downtown mosque.

Hours before the mosque incident, an activist of Shiite militant group, Sipah-i-Mohammad Pakistan, was gunned down in a suburban neighbourhood.

Punjab, home to 60 per cent of Pakistan's 130-million population, has been plagued by hit-and-run at-

tacks blamed on militants from majority Sunni and minority Shiite Muslims, claiming more than 100 lives in six months.

The Punjab government has announced new steps to check sectarianism, ordering confiscation of provocative religious literature.

The authorities have been directed to take legal action against writers and publishers spreading sectarian hatred, officials said.

A government official said a scheme was being prepared to induce citizens to cooperate with the police, under which awards would be given for information leading to arrest of those engaged in "heinous crimes."

Pakistani President Farooq Ahmad Leghari has termed the growing incidents of sectarian killings a "big threat" to national unity.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said his four-month old government was

determined to eliminate sectarianism and lawlessness.

Meanwhile, a powerful bomb explosion ripped through a passenger bus Monday near the Pakistani city of Sialkot, killing at least eight people and injuring 12 others, local police said.

The bomb exploded as the bus carrying about 20 people approached Sialkot on a regular run from Lakhnau on the border with India, they said.

A couple and their three-year-old son and a three-month baby were killed on the spot while a teenage boy, two children and an old man died in hospital, a police official said.

He said the bomb had been planted in the rear of the bus.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing and police said an investigation was underway.

Queen Elizabeth continues Canadian visit as H. Kong handover proceeds

TORONTO (AFP) — Queen Elizabeth II was continuing her Canadian tour Monday as her son, Prince Charles, presided over the final ceremonies of the British empire in Hong Kong.

The queen was due to arrive at North Bay, Ontario, at 11:55 a.m. — just five minutes before China resumed its sovereignty of her last major colony.

In what was seen by many as a symbolic gesture, the queen visited Canada's largest Chinese community Sunday.

In blistering 30-degree Celsius heat, the queen officially opened a geriatric residence in Toronto's Chinatown.

More than 200,000 people of Chinese origin, most of them from Hong Kong, live in Toronto.

Asked why the queen was visiting Chinatown, the deputy press secretary of Buckingham Palace, Penny Russell-Smith, said: "It is perhaps appropriate because we are now on the eve of the handover of Hong Kong."

The queen is being represented at the handover of Britain's largest remaining colony to China Monday

night by her eldest son, Prince Charles. The queen was officially greeted at the geriatric home by its oldest residents, Yick Oi Yu Chan, 102, who originally came from mainland China, and Yee Yuen, 83.

Neither Mr. Chan, who lived for 10 years in Hong Kong before coming to Canada, in 1978, nor Mr. Yuen, who has lived in Canada for 45 years, can speak English.

Nevertheless, through an interpreter, the queen had a lengthy chat with both of them.

Mr. Chan, who as the oldest resident of the home always greets visiting dignitaries, was obviously enraptured with the queen, and the monarch had difficulty in persuading Mr. Chan to end a prolonged handshake.

The queen, dressed in a blue and white dress, with a blue hat decorated with a feather, appeared unaffected by the hot and humid weather.

Earlier in the day, a woman fainted as the queen dedicated an extension of Saint James Cathedral and the installation of a new window. At the Chinatown festivities, several children

were overcome by the heat as the queen watched a traditional Chinese display of lion and dragon dancing.

There, in an honour rarely accorded, the queen was invited to paint in the eye of a ceremonial dragon.

Security officials had few problems with the 800 or so spectators, mainly ethnic Chinese, who cheered as the queen arrived.

The only apparent incident was at a neighbouring house, seemingly the home of some Irish immigrants, where the slogan "Brits out of Ireland" and two loudspeakers could be seen.

After several Chinese complained to the police, the loudspeakers were removed and no disruption occurred.

The queen was out of town — at the race track — just as central Toronto became jammed with its annual gay and lesbian pride parade.

Amid several topless women, one hairy-chested and muscular man — dressed in summer frock — waved his flag into the air, asking the crowd, "Who's the prettiest queen of all?"

The crowd roared back: "You are."

Cambodia's Hun Sen warns rival over troops

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's Second Prime Minister Hun Sen warned Monday that he would use force against his political opponents if they were found to be bringing troops into Phnom Penh illegally to beef up their strength.

The warning came as officials loyal to Mr. Hun Sen and those loyal to his political rival, First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, traded accusations of clandestine troop build-ups in and around the capital.

"I would like to declare in advance that if they hide illegal weapons and bring in illegal ... forces and do not let us check ... I will fight," he said.

Mr. Hun Sen was apparently referring to reports that Prince Ranariddh's senior military adviser was bringing Khmer Rouge defectors to Phnom Penh from northwestern provinces to boost troop strength in the capital.

"I haven't given orders to fight anywhere yet but if there are illegal Khmer Rouge based anywhere we must be careful and need to intervene immediately," Mr. Hun Sen said. "They can create terrorism."

Prince Ranariddh has denied the alleged troop movements saying he already had enough forces in the capital and did not need to bring any more men in from the provinces.

Mr. Hun Sen, speaking at a ceremony at a pagoda near Phnom Penh, warned that he had formidable military forces at his call.

"There are more than 100 tanks in the country. I can order them all," he said.

Mr. Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh formed a fractured coalition in 1993 after Prince Ranariddh won a U.N.-supervised election.

Prince Ranariddh agreed to a ruling alliance with Mr. Hun Sen after the head of the former communist government objected to the election result.

Relations between the two prime ministers deteriorated sharply last year when Prince Ranariddh demanded a greater share of power to govern in the provinces.

Their feud has crippled government and led to mounting international concern about political stability and violence in the country.

Last week U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright cancelled a trip to Cambodia after a brief but fierce gun battle in central Phnom Penh between security men loyal to the two premiers.

The Group of Seven industrial countries and Russia sent two envoys to Cambodia last week to meet the two prime ministers and discuss the group's worries about political stability.

The splintering Khmer Rouge guerrilla group has also become a major source of friction between the two, with both men vying for political gain as the guerrilla group breaks up.

Political analysts are predicting a rocky run-up to Cambodia's next election on May 23.

"I seriously doubt whether it (the political situation) can get any better," Steve Heder, a lecturer at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, told Reuters in an interview Sunday. "It's just not workable."

A Cambodian political source who declined to be identified said he was deeply concerned about the prevailing atmosphere of confrontation.

"There's nothing to de-escalate the crisis," the Cambodian political source said. "The situation takes on its own logic."

North Korean family defects from former Soviet Union

SEOUL (AFP) — A North Korean family of three from a former Soviet republic has defected to South Korea, a Foreign Ministry official here said Monday.

"The family, including husband and wife, and their 15-year-old daughter arrived in Seoul this morning. And another North Korean male defector also arrived from there," he said.

The husband Min Mun-Sik, 48, claimed he had worked in the former Soviet Union as a supervisor of a North Korean state-run coal trading company, the official said.

The other defector Lee Song-Ho, 37, who said he was an interpreter for a joint-venture firm between North Korea's government trading agency and a former Soviet republic, also sought to defect, the ministry official said.

This was the first time a North Korean family from the former Soviet Union has defected to the South, he said.

"Until now those defectors from the region have been mostly lumberjacks. This is the first family defectors from there," he said.

Hundreds of North Koreans are seeking asylum in the South, fleeing the poverty-stricken state. South Korean government officials are worried the number will greatly increase because of worsening food shortages in the North.

Last week, a 22-year-old North Korean army sergeant defected to the South by swimming a river to cross the demilitarized zone.

Meanwhile, North Korea has agreed to resume a joint search with the United States in July for remains of American soldiers missing in the Korean War. Pyongyang's official media said Monday.

The agreement came at talks between U.S. and North Korean officials in New York last week, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a

report monitored in Seoul.

"They agreed to conduct three rounds of joint exhumation in Unsan county, North Pyongan province in July, September and October and reached an agreement on all matters discussed," KCNA said.

At the three-day New York meeting, which ended Friday, the two sides discussed details of the searches, including "the time, venue, exhumations, supply of materials, personal safety, convenience and communications," it said.

The U.S. delegation was headed by a Defence Department deputy director responsible for prisoners of war and missing in action, the agency said.

Under an agreement reached on May 14, Washington and Pyongyang have discussed a proposal that U.S. investigators resume searching for the remains of U.S. servicemen killed in the North during the 1950-53 Korean War.

Russia, Japan agree to boost ties

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia and Japan agreed to further improve relations and develop joint economic projects in the Far East during talks in Hong Kong Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov said.

Mr. Primakov told Russian independent NTV Television that he had agreed with his Japanese counterpart Yukihiko Ikeda "to make further progress towards improving relations," building on the rapprochement achieved at the Denver Summit of the Eight earlier this month.

Mr. Primakov said that on the economic front, "this means Japan should be making huge investments in the Sakhalin I and II (oil and gas) projects, along with joint economic activities on the Kuril Islands."

Mr. Primakov and Mr. Ikeda were visiting Hong Kong

for Britain's historic handover of the colony to China.

Japan and Russia failed to conclude a peace treaty at the end of World War II due to a territorial dispute over the southern Kuril Islands, occupied by the Red Army in 1945.

Last week Japan protested to Russia over an incident in which a Russian coast guard vessel allegedly opened fire at a Japanese fishing boat near the disputed islands, injuring two people on board.

In the Sakhalin I project, two Russian companies (Sakhalinmorneftegaz and Rosneft), U.S. oil major Exxon and Sodeco of Japan will develop offshore reserves containing 2.2 billion barrels of oil and 15 trillion cubic feet of gas.

In Sakhalin II, covering an area with reserves of one billion barrels of oil and 13

million cubic feet of gas, the partners are: Mitsui and Mitsubishi of Japan, Shell (Anglo-Dutch), Marathon and McDermott of the United States, Rosneft and Sakhalinmorneftegaz.

A Russian Foreign Ministry official confirmed that President Boris Yeltsin would hold summit talks later this year with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

In Denver, Mr. Hashimoto had proposed a meeting with Mr. Yeltsin in the Far East or Siberia for an informal weekend of talks, "without neckties."

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin will also pay his first ever official visit to Japan later this year, the ministry official said.

Patten lists things to miss about Hong Kong

HONG KONG (R) — Piles of ageing eggs, squawking hens and Guinea fowls, caged grasshoppers and much, much more are on the nostalgia list of outgoing Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten.

"The string sacks full of frogs as black as your hat, the squirming eels, the great slabs of tuna, the wonderful fish sliced right down the middle with the life still pumping in them. Ah, what a sight," Mr. Patten told the South China Morning Post.

In an article published Monday, the last day of

British colonial rule, Mr. Patten exulted about tools he found at the top of possession street, the spot where the British planted its flag 156 years ago.

"There are thermos flasks, there are woks. There are gardening gloves. There are secateurs. All the things that make an ironmongers so much fun," Mr. Patten said.

Mr. Patten said he would also miss Andy Ng, an antique dealer who "taught me more than anybody else about Chinese arts and crafts."

"One thing I will miss will be that fantastic exotic rambling through these bazaars of this, the greatest maritime Chinese city," said Mr. Patten.

He also said he would miss assorted civil servants, a tennis partner, his personal assistant, the proprietor of his favourite restaurant and a chief steward who gave Mr. Patten race tips.

Mr. Patten's term as Hong Kong governor ended at midnight, when Britain's Prince Charles formally handed back Hong Kong to Chinese President Jiang Zemin.

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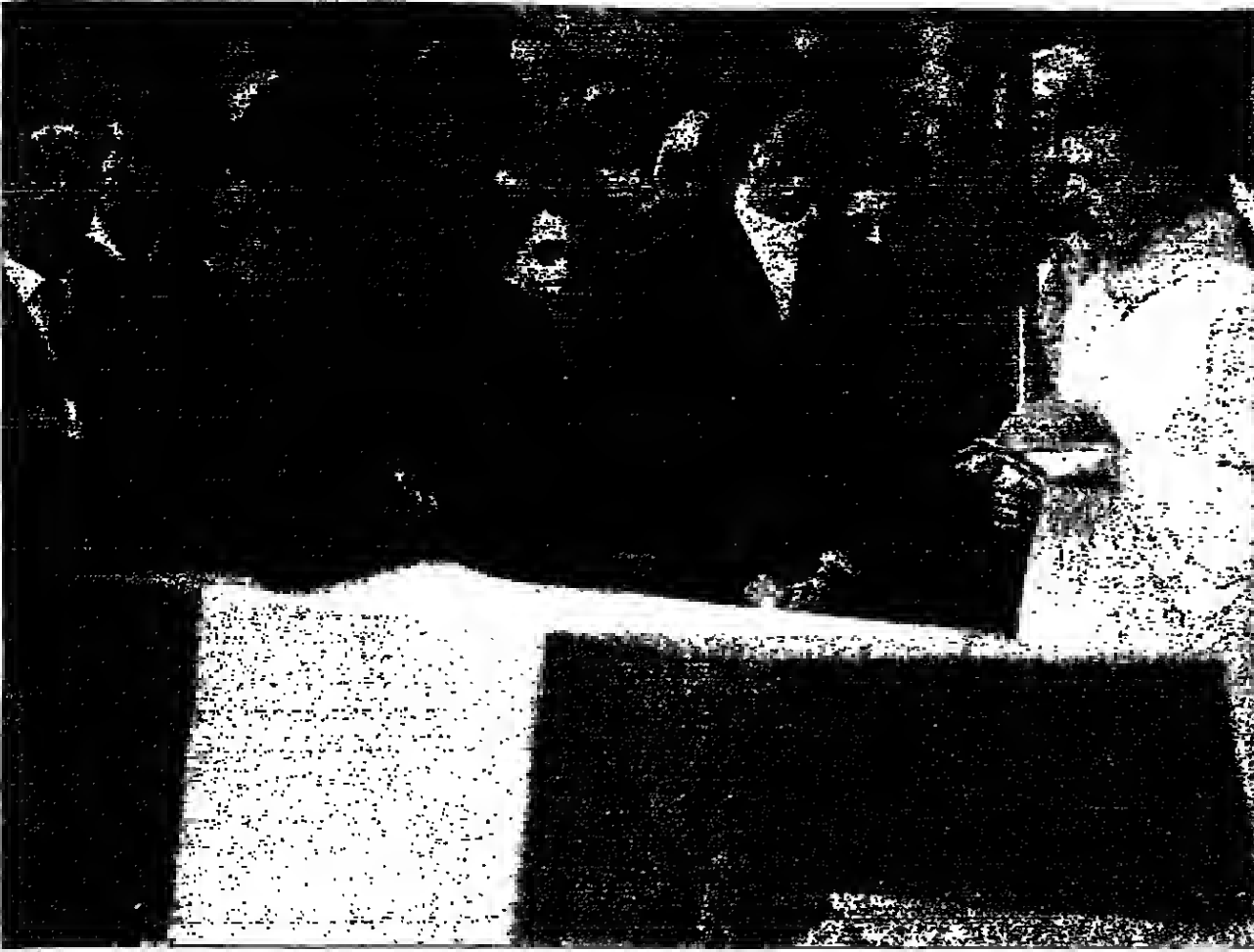
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French oceanographer Jacques-Yves Cousteau's widow Francine Cousteau (left) and her daughter Diane cry as her son Pierre-Yves Cousteau (3rd left) prays in front of Cousteau's coffin during a funeral service in Paris Notre-Dame Cathedral Monday. Cousteau died last week aged 87 (Reuters photo)

Memory of Cousteau honoured at Notre Dame mass

PARIS (R) — The memory of undersea explorer and environmentalist Jacques-Yves Cousteau was celebrated Monday at a funeral service in Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral.

Mr. Cousteau, who died last week at the age of 87, was to be buried afterwards in a family plot in his native Bordeaux region in southwestern France.

Thousands gathered for the mass at the towering 12th century cathedral on the Seine River in central Paris, an honour generally reserved to heads of state.

The last such ceremony

took place in January 1996 after the death of former President Francois Mitterrand.

Cousteau's coffin was carried to the cathedral by veteran crew members of the Calypso, the converted British mine sweeper aboard which he shot *The Silent World*, the film which first gave him world fame.

Among those attending the mass was French President Jacques Chirac, who had mourned him as an "enchanter" and praised his pioneering films that explored exotic climates from the Antarctic ice shelf to coral atolls.

In one of his last cam-

paigns, the outspoken Cousteau joined international protests against Mr. Chirac's nuclear testing in the South Pacific in 1995-96.

Cousteau accused world leaders and businesses of irresponsibility and an obsession with money to the detriment of a clean and healthy environment, painting an apocalyptic picture of the gradual destruction of the planet and in particular its oceans.

A former navy officer who became an explorer, ecologist, filmmaker, teacher, inventor, millionaire and member of the prestigious

Academie Francaise, he also was co-inventor in 1943 of diving gear that freed undersea explorers from heavy helmets so they could float in the water as if in space.

Mr. Cousteau's widow, Francine, has pledged to pursue his projects after his death.

She said last week her top priorities were to build a Calypso II to keep exploring the world as "a look-out to tomorrow's problems," and to start up a television channel called "The Human Voice" to record the culture and language of endangered peoples.

Indian politician gets respite from arrest until July 21

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian detectives promised Monday not to arrest a colleague of Prime Minister Indira Kumar Gujral for at least three weeks in connection with a corruption case.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) told a court in the eastern city of Patna that they would not detain Laloo Prasad Yadav until the next hearing of the case on July 21.

Mr. Yadav, President of Mr. Gujral's Janata Dal (People's Party) which heads India's minority coalition government, as well as chief minister of the state of Bihar, faces arrest in a

\$271-million graft case.

Mr. Yadav has denied the charges and refused to resign as chief minister of Bihar, a populous crime-prone province of 90 million people.

He had sought bail from a court to prevent his possible arrest.

Mr. Yadav's belligerence has taken the Janata Dal to the brink of a split. But party sources said Mr. Gujral was bidding to avoid a break-up that could weaken his position as prime minister.

Earlier Monday, Mr. Yadav held a closed-door meeting at Patna, the Bihar

capital, with an aide reportedly carrying proposals from the premier on how to resolve the crisis.

The problem has been compounded by Mr. Yadav's decision to boycott the upcoming party presidential elections.

The Yadav affair emerged as the biggest crisis for Mr. Gujral since he became prime minister, heading a minority centre-left united front government in April.

On Sunday, Mr. Gujral denied in a television interview that the bickering in the Janata Dal had undermined his government's credibility.

"If you look at other political parties, they too have been facing situations," the United News of India (UNI) quoted him as saying. "After all, differences can arise."

Mr. Gujral, however, refused to say if he would accept to become party president in an attempt to reunite the Janata Dal.

A split in the party would not immediately threaten the government, which survives with the outside legislative support of the Congress (I) Party. But analysts say it would weaken Mr. Gujral's standing.

Australian police criticised for shooting Frenchman

SYDNEY (R) — Sydney police who shot dead a knife-wielding Frenchman on Bondi beach overreacted and should have avoided the fatal shooting, the dead man's relatives said Monday.

The family of Roni Levi said from France that they were shocked that police did not try to capture Mr. Levi in the weekend incident rather than shoot him.

"Because you are in a uniform with a gun, you cannot play cowboy," Ilan Levi, the dead man's brother, told Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Radio.

The Levi family also sent an e-mail message to the ABC saying: "We are shocked to hear that instead of disarming him, there were no other alternatives than killing him... instead of catching him or hurting him in a leg or in an arm, which could have saved his life."

Roni Levi, 33, was shot four times in the chest by two policemen in a dawn confrontation Saturday on Bondi beach, Australia's most famous beach. He died in hospital.

The New South Wales Civil Liberties Council also criticised the police shooting, which is under internal investi-

gation.

Council President John Marsden said the death could have been avoided if police had called psychiatric experts to the scene or used rubber bullets.

"They (police) should have called a psychiatric unit and got people to deal with it," Mr. Marsden told reporters. "There is an urgent need for the police to use other methods rather than bullets that kill. Why couldn't they have used rubber bullets?"

Senior New South Wales state police have announced compulsory re-training of officers to deal with mentally disturbed people, but the NSW Police Association, the union representing officers, called for more non-lethal control devices to be issued to police.

Association President Phil Tunchon said extendible batons or pepper spray should be available to police, but warned these devices might not have prevented the Bondi shooting.

"It's a very difficult situation because incidents of these types require split-second decisions," Mr. Tunchon said.

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Floridian may be UFO believers' nefarious redhead

ORLANDO (R) — Joe Kittinger retired to Florida, took up hobbies and until a year ago never suspected he was a key figure in a far-reaching conspiracy theory.

Then a U.S. Air Force captain called and asked Mr. Kittinger if he had ever dropped crash-test dummies from high-altitude balloons near Roswell, New Mexico. "About 50 times," Mr. Kittinger said.

With that, the air force was one step closer to closing its books on reports of flying saucers, alien autopsies and government cover-ups at Roswell.

The 68-year-old Kittinger, when he was stationed there, sported a thick head of red hair, wore captain's bars on his uniform and recovered lifeless, anthropomorphic figures from the desert.

That made him a good fit for the mysterious red-head

ded captain, a nefarious figure in the annals of UFOlogy, the man who believers allege spirited away the alien victims of a downed flying saucer in 1947.

If you search the many Internet sites devoted to Roswell, you'll find dozens of references to the red-headed captain. He also figures prominently in many books and film and television reenactments. It was he, according to believers, who first drew a curtain of secrecy on those alien bodies that has not been parted in 50 years.

"It's all a crock," Mr. Kittinger said. "We needed the data (from the dummies) and we went to a lot of trouble to recover them. If that meant searching a wheat field in the middle of the night, that's what happened."

Roswell this week celebrates the 50th anniversary

of an event the air force insists never happened. By naming Mr. Kittinger in its own recently published investigation — The Roswell Report: Case Closed — the air force hopes to drive the point home.

Although Mr. Kittinger fits the description of the red-headed captain — his telephone answering machine now greets callers with the words "Hello, you've reached the home of the UFO mystery man" — he was nowhere near Roswell when the events of 1947 did or did not take place.

But he was there in the 1950s, an expert in high-altitude balloons and parachuting, conducting experiments on whether astronauts could one day survive parachute drops from the edge of space.

He supports the air force conclusions that when UFO

phenomena re-emerged as a popular subject in the 1970s, the residents of Roswell confused memories of events separated by years and tied them all to a 1947 newspaper headline about a "flying disk" recovered in the desert.

The air force, which originally said it had captured a flying saucer, quickly reversed itself to say the disk was actually a high-altitude balloon.

After exhaustive research, that is still what it says. UFO enthusiasts accuse the air force of a massive cover-up.

"People are going to believe what they want to," Mr. Kittinger said. "Too many people have made too much money spinning Roswell conspiracy theories to simply accept the air force's conclusions."

Berisha concedes defeat of his party in Albanian polls

TIRANA (AFP) — Albanian President Sali Berisha Monday conceded the defeat of his Democratic Party to the opposition centre-left in elections designed to end four months of chaos in the Balkan country.

"Yesterday, Albanian voters decided the Democratic Party would be in the opposition," he said in a short televised message Sunday's first-round poll.

Socialist Party leader, Fatos Nano, called for Mr. Berisha's immediate resignation.

Mr. Nano, whose party heads the three-party opposition coalition, said the Socialists had themselves taken 63 of a possible 115 seats in the first round, with a second still to come next Sunday.

Mr. Berisha told television viewers that his party would work to "consolidate

democracy, its values and its laws" while in opposition.

"The vote and the verdict of the people will be respected, as I will keep my promises," he added in a broad hint that he would honour a pre-election pledge to step down if the vote went against him.

Sources close to the presidency, while insisting that he would honour his pledge,

said Mr. Berisha would wait for the official results before making a further announcement. He has previously refused to contemplate forming a coalition with the Socialists.

The results were recognised by a European Union "troika" sent to Albania to monitor the vote.

In a joint statement, the troika said the vote "can be the basis of a stable democratic system which all Al-

banians want and deserve."

Mr. Nano told his press conference: "Nobody in Albania today need feel like the loser." He even paid tribute to the "civilised silence" of the defeated Democratic Party and its supporters, and said he hoped that the "civilised silence" would also be respected by certain armed elements including the Presidential Guard.

Preliminary results released earlier Monday by the Central Election Commission gave a majority of seats to the opposition.

The deputy head of the commission, Fatos Klosi, told AFP that the three-party coalition, led by the Socialist Party, had taken 14 of a possible 19 seats in the capital Tirana.

Late Sunday, after a day of brisk voting marked by a series of snail but violent

incidents, Mr. Nano claimed the coalition had won some two-thirds of the seats in Albania's 140-seat National Assembly.

The defeat spells the end of five years of increasingly autocratic rule by Mr. Berisha and his party, which was seriously undermined in March when Albanians took to the streets over the collapse of bogus investment schemes.

The armed rebellion that followed took large swathes of the country out of government control and led to weeks of chaotic violence and banditry in which an estimated 1,600 people have died.

Sunday's vote was generally calm despite the death of one electoral official and problems with voting in some areas.

U.K. admits nuclear waste dumping in Irish Sea

LONDON (R) — Radioactive waste was secretly dumped close to busy shipping lanes between Scotland and Northern Ireland in the 1950s, British government officials said Monday.

The Scottish Office confirmed a report in the Guardian newspaper which said that up to two tonnes of low-level nuclear waste, packed in heavy metal drums and encased in concrete, was dumped in the Irish Sea.

Britain previously vehemently denied persistent reports of nuclear waste dumping in the area, which is close to three ferry routes and a gas pipeline being built between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

"Ministers have recently been made aware that small quantities of low- to intermediate-contaminated waste were dumped in the 1950s. Prior to the discovery, ministers were not aware it had been dumped," a Scottish Office spokesman said.

The spokesman said that details of the materials and quantities that were dumped are still being investigated and that Britain's new Labour government would make a full statement shortly.

But the spokesman said the levels of radioactive material were so insignificant that they could not be measured.

The Guardian said that the waste was mostly from civilian sources and came from laboratories and from luminous paint and clock dials.

It was dumped in the Irish Sea's Beaufort Dyke — a sea channel about six miles off the Scottish coast which was used as a munitions dump until the 1970s by the Ministry of Defence.

2 U.S. Marines found drowned in Japan after typhoon

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese police said Monday it had found the bodies of two U.S. Marine Corps servicemen in a river near the U.S. base at Iwakuni in western Japan.

Police identified the pair as John Kramer, 20, and John Bosganian, 22, who apparently drowned in the Swollen River after Typhoon Peter hit Iwakuni in Yamaguchi prefecture Saturday.

They had gone to the river with three other servicemen, a police spokesman said. Mr. Kramer, Mr. Bosganian and another serviceman had gone swimming, but got into difficulties, he said, adding that the third marine survived.

Britain appeals for calm in N. Irish march season

BELFAST (R) — Britain urged rival Protestants and Catholics Sunday not to pitch Northern Ireland into turmoil during the province's volatile "marching season."

Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam made an impassioned plea to them to compromise about the most controversial Protestant parade at Drumcree near Portadown on July 6, and pledged she would do everything to avert a repeat of chaos that erupted last year.

"Some people seem determined to push Northern Ireland to the brink. We will all pay a very heavy price if they are allowed to succeed," Ms. Mowlam wrote in Belfast's Sunday Life newspaper.

Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), said no effort should be spared to avoid a fresh flare-up over the contentious march.

In a statement, he called on Protestant politicians to encourage the march organisers "to step back from confrontation."

He accused Britain of bias against Catholic nationalists in their handling of last

year's events and said the Protestant Orange Order had been "allowed to walk over the rights of the nationalist community."

Police vehicles blocked a bridge across Belfast's River Lagan Sunday to prevent around 100 members of the order parading through a Catholic area. They marched up to the police lines before peacefully holding an open-air religious service nearby.

Later Martin Smyth, a former head of the order, dismissed predictions of widespread trouble arising from the Drumcree march. He told BBC Radio he believed next weekend would be generally peaceful but added that some "idiots... will act foolishly."

Ms. Mowlam urged a redoubling of efforts to stave off trouble at the Drumcree parade, which the organisers want to take through a Catholic enclave, and said Britain would publish new laws this year to defuse controversy about annual parades.

"To the two groups involved I say, pull back from the brink. Think about the consequences of what you are planning to do for people everywhere in northern

Ireland. It is not too late. There is no shame in compromise," she said.

Ms. Mowlam has tried to end an impasse over controversial marches since coming into office on May 1, when Labour won a landslide victory over the ruling Conservatives.

Britain fears that parade trouble could increase instability in the province amid a resurgence by IRA fighters opposed to rule from London and revenge attacks by Protestant loyalist gunmen.

Last July the province lurched into sectarian turmoil during a confrontation at Drumcree.

Police at first banned the march to prevent trouble but did a U-turn after four days of militant Protestant demonstrations that brought the province to a standstill.

Catholics, who generally favour an end to British rule, erupted in fury when the pro-British Orangemen were allowed to proceed through the nationalist zone.

The Protestant marching season climaxes on July 12 in province-wide processions marking the anniversary of a landmark Protestant battlefield victory of the Catholic Irish in 1690.

Bosnian Serb president detained at Belgrade Airport, report says

BELGRADE (AFP) — Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic was detained for an hour and a half late Sunday by Yugoslav police at Belgrade Airport, the independent news agency, BETA, reported Monday, quoting Ms. Plavsic's office in Banja Luka.

Ms. Plavsic's staff said she was held for questioning, but could not say where she had gone afterwards.

But quoting sources close to the Republika Srpska (RS) authorities, BETA reported that Ms. Plavsic was taken by Yugoslav police to the border with Bosnia, where she was banded over to the Bosnian Serb police.

She was later taken to the police station in Belgrade, where she "stayed during the whole evening," BETA said.

Questioned by AFP, a police official in Belgrade would not confirm this information.

The top international organisation in Bosnia, the Office of the High Representative in Banja Luka, as well as the local radio and television stations, also could not confirm the BETA report when contacted by phone from Belgrade.

Ms. Plavsic heads RS, the half of Bosnia-Herzegovina under Bosnian Serb rule under the Dayton Peace Accords. The other half is the Muslim-Croat Federation.

BETA said that she was coming back from Britain, where she ended her visit because of information that the RS government would discuss the interior minister, hardliner Dragan Kijac.

Ms. Plavsic dismissed Mr. Kijac Saturday, accusing him of "usurping her powers and undercutting" her functions, but the Bosnian Serb government rejected her dismissal, saying it was "anti-constitutional and illegal."

Ms. Plavsic, a hardliner herself throughout the Bosnian war, is reported to be now battling the hardliners. Recent statements by her have taken a more moderate line.

Bosnian Serb police, headed by Mr. Kijac, have failed to cooperate fully with the U.N.'s police forces in Bosnia, and the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFDR), notably on the return of refugees to their homes in Serb-held areas and on the handover of war crimes suspects.

Kabila's Congo blocks massacre probe

KINSHASA (R) — Laurent Kabila's Congo has rejected the terms of a U.N. investigation into alleged massacres of Hutu refugees, the United Nations said Sunday.

An advance team sent to the capital Kinshasa said the government had refused to accept two of the conditions set down in a resolution of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

The mission follows persistent reports of alleged massacres deep in the jungles of what was then Zaire by Mr. Kabila's rebel forces or their Tutsi allies, who

ousted President Mobutu Sese Seko a month ago.

The Washington Post reported this month that Mr. Kabila had told local officials to do as little as possible to aid the U.N. investigation and not to show them sites to investigate.

Mr. Kabila denies this, and says there were no massacres.

His officials objected to the composition of the investigation team, that had been due to start work on July 7, and to the time span for the events they were to investigate.

"We would very much

like to begin the investigation on July 7 but that date is not looking very realistic," U.N. spokesman John Mills told Reuters.

"To conduct an investigation like this we need the full cooperation of the authorities. At present the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is not prepared to accept the investigation established by the commission."

U.N. investigators were also thwarted on an earlier attempt to visit eastern Zaire in May.

Features
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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Right move, but...

LOOKING BACK to 1988-1989 and comparing the financial and monetary situation then with that of today, an observer cannot but recognise the formidable changes and progress achieved over a period of eight years. Who could have predicted at the end of the last decade that Jordan, by mid-1997, would be free from heavy monetary controls? Who could have expected the country to push towards total liberalisation of foreign exchange?

These policies that will ultimately consolidate the monetary and financial stability will also assure investors here and abroad that Jordan is now well-placed on the road towards a healthier economic climate. The step-by-step growth, economic reform and adjustment of budget and trade imbalances have not of course been painless.

The decision of the Central Bank of Jordan Sunday to abolish all remaining controls on foreign exchange is a certificate of financial maturity that carries with it the elements of confidence, trust and strength. For this reason, Jordanians will certainly witness better conditions in the days ahead because the liberalisation measure will undoubtedly stimulate business activity, attract more investments and open wider channels for the inflow of funds.

Bankers, analysts and economists unanimously agree that economic controls are a source of fear, hesitation and insecurity. Consequently they all applaud the step of opening Jordan to the world and see nothing but positive results from the Central Bank's move.

The euphoria though should not prevent the Central Bank from hearing the cries of industrialists and businesspersons who are complaining of prohibitive interest rates. With interest as high as 15 per cent on credits, manufacturers and traders are being squeezed and choked for cheaper liquidity. When the purchasing power of the people and the limited income of so many families are taken into consideration, the gravity of the high interest policy becomes clear.

Having attained the level of full liberalisation of foreign exchange, the work is largely completed successfully, and the time has come to work on lowering interest rates without losing the precious achievements that were secured.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Aswaq Monday urged the Arab Nation to take a lesson from China which has regained the British colony of Hong Kong after 155 years of colonial rule. Rashid Hassan said that the Chinese have faced wars, occupation by the Japanese and the English forces, the opium war and many atrocities committed by the invading forces. He said that over the past 155 years, China was partitioned, with each of the colonial powers controlling part of the nation, but the country finally regained its lands through determination and resolve because the Chinese have maintained their national unity all along. The Arabs are in need to learn a lesson from China and should realise that the Zionists who have occupied the Palestinian land for 50 years can be evicted from the occupied territories. Like the Chinese, said the writer, the Palestinians faced atrocities, massacres and repression at the hands of the Zionists and like the Chinese, they have lost their lands, but nothing is impossible if the Arabs are united behind their Palestinian brothers in their struggle to regain the usurped homeland.

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm discussed the controversial Doha Middle East and North Africa economic summit scheduled for November. Jordan, which hosted the second Middle East and North Africa economic summit, has no reason to refuse to attend the coming meeting, except if backed by an all out pan-Arab decision on this issue, said Taher Adwan. Perhaps the situation in the Middle East and in Palestine, at the time of the earlier economic summits, had permitted Israel's participation in such meetings, but the situation at hand is quite different, he noted. At the moment, the peace process is deadlocked and the Netanyahu government is determined to ruin the peace process, a situation that prompted the Arab League to call on the Arab countries — except for Egypt and Jordan — to halt procedures for normalisation with the Jewish state, the writer pointed out. The writer said that if the Doha summit, which is considered part of the peace process, is to be cancelled, nothing short of an Arab summit decision on this matter can end the controversy.

The View from Fourth Circle

Bagpipers, deodorant commercials and Hong Kong's thrilling meaning

By Rami G. Khouri

THE RETURN of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty as of this (Tuesday) morning (July 1) has been given such extensive press coverage and political prominence in the major Western capitals, especially Washington and London, that my Third World bones have instinctively reacted with a combination of suspicion and a desire to probe more into the deeper meaning of this event.

There are usually two reasons why the American/British media-defined-and-dominated New World Order heaps such massive attention on any person, place or event: the potential for substantial financial gain, or for deep psychological damage bordering on humiliation or even national trauma.

The return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty clearly falls into the second category. It is the unspoken but very loud and powerful expression of the end of the modern imperial/colonial era. The symbolism of China ruling Hong Kong again is spectacularly multi-faceted: it is about the past, present and future, about ideology and identity, about race and empire and about human values and laws. This is a major milestone in the modern world, the closing of that spectacularly audacious chapter of modern history by which European states (with the U.S. and Japan in some cases) in the half-a-century after 1865 achieved two things: a) they physically conquered, politically dominated and economically exploited much of the known territories of Asia, Africa, and Oceania lands beyond Europe and the Americas and, b) they very slowly attempted to transform their subject lands and people into darker versions of themselves, reflecting the twin values of free market, globalised capitalism and of pluralistic democracy grounded in personal freedoms.

The logic of the predominantly white, Christian European conquest of the world that had started with the Portuguese, Spanish and Italian mercantile expeditions of the 15th century culminated in the late 19th century in widespread colonial empires that sought to manufacture not only a new world order, but something far more daring and ambitious — a new Southern Man, reformulated in the image, clothes and mindset of Northern Man, and serving the material and financial interests of the industrialised capitalist/colonial/imperial economies.

Hong Kong encapsulates the greatest qualitative development and longevity of this process — resulting today in millions of Chinese people dressing, working, spending, thinking and generally behaving like British stockbrokers and bus drivers. The resumption of Chinese sovereignty in Hong Kong elicits so much more media drama and cover-

age than did, say, the independence of Bahrain or Angola because of two main reasons that I can think of: a) Hong Kong represents the stunning zenith of the colonial/imperial venture, which now must be relinquished to its natural cultural environment and historical home and, b) the very sharp contrast between Western-style Hong Kong and the Eastern-anchored People's Republic of China, which reminds the West that it has not fully triumphed in its half-a-millennium-old battle since the 15th century to remake the world in its own image, or at least to serve its own economic interests.

The fact that Hong Kong is reverting to Chinese control, rather than achieving independence, is all the more problematic for many in the West; for the Chinese culture (along perhaps with the Arab-Islamic World) represents the only significant challenge or alternative to Western global cultural and economic dominance. It is no accident, therefore, that the United States secretary of state arrogantly noted a few days ago that the world would be watching and monitoring China's behaviour in Hong Kong. No accident because China represents everything that the United States neither understands nor tolerates — a distinct, non-Western culture, independence of mind, assertion of national values and policies, non-individualistic identity, and a political system that defines issues of participation, accountability and human rights in very different terms than these are defined in the U.S.-dominated West.

I am not a fan of the Chinese political system and would not wish to live under its autocratic style of governance, but I am also not a fan of the long and bitter legacy of largely British- and French-defined, and often American-perpetuated, colonialism that has left us such vexing problems and painful modern wrecks as Kenya, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, Algeria, Palestine, Somalia, and many others. The little drama in Hong Kong this week has been so severely blown out of proportion by the U.S.-and-U.K.-dominated global mass media because it represents the return of the only force that the northern industrialised powers truly fear — global history. By "global history" I mean the perpetual and natural evolution of indigenous cultural values and political identities by people throughout the world who are not necessarily white, Christian or deeply impressed by 24-hour-a-day bowling alleys, gambling casinos and pancake houses. The industrialised powers along the North Atlantic rim may have assumed that their colonial reconfigurations of the world in recent centuries had redefined both the values of human beings and the tra-

jectories of global history. Bahrain and Angola may have reinforced this sentiment; Hong Kong shatters it.

I have had much fun watching American and British television in recent weeks, given the manner in which they have transformed this powerful historical moment into an enterprise of almost sheer pomp, entertainment, and sentimentality, with a secondary slice of uncertainty thrown in. But uncertainty for what? For the well-being of Hong Kong and its people and their rights? Or is the expression of concern for the future — including the U.S. secretary of state's diplomatic and historical buffoonery — actually an expression of concern about the future of the sorts of Western values that have battled for space in the lands and minds of darker people around the world since the mid-15th century?

So, what we witness in Hong Kong may not be the end of colonialism, but its redefinition and its modernization. The simultaneous expression of interest in Hong Kong this week by political and economic powers from throughout the world is reminiscent of the looting of Chinese territory and resources in the 19th century by the imperial powers of that world. The big, very visible difference is that imperial interests are expressed not in territorial terms, or even primarily in economic terms, but rather in terms of human and political values — democracy, human rights, individual rights, freedom of speech and assembly, the right to form political parties, women's rights, intellectual property rights, children's rights, labour rights and the right to demonstrate in the streets. Hong Kong is no longer a colony, but it remains very much a colonial endeavour — of the sort initiated mostly by the British and other Europeans, perpetuated mostly by the Americans and watched in between deodorant and credit card commercials by all of us in a world awed by entertainment yet more respectful of the greater power of cultural integrity and historical continuity.

Hong Kong — complete with its post-colonial bagpiper corps — is as much about the future as it is about the past, and as much about all of us as it is about China and Great Britain. We will watch it not because of the neo-imperial tormented psyches manifested by the American secretary of state or the British foreign minister, but because it represents the latest, thrilling episode in a global historical saga that has defined us for thousands of years. Play on, bagpipers; the world watches and listens with much interest.

The empire that won't go away

By Gwynne Dyer

"IT IS difficult to explain how it occurs in Hong Kong and not in Gibraltar," mused Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar recently. "Spain maintains its claim of sovereignty over Gibraltar. We have ample reason for it and we expect time and common sense to establish a solution."

Nonsense, retorted Gibraltar's Chief Minister Peter Caruana. "Unlike Hong Kong, Britain is under no legal obligation to hand Gibraltar back. Britain made a solemn assurance never to transfer Gibraltar to Spain and that promise has been repeated to us by every British government since 1969."

In truth, the British Foreign Office would gladly give Gibraltar back to Spain if it could get the 30,000 Gibraltarians to agree. With Hong Kong gone, the remaining bits of an empire that once included a quarter of the world's population amount to 13 widely scattered territories with a total of just 180,000 people, and Britain would not mind if they all left. But they will not go.

Britain's overseas empire began in 1585 on the shore of St. John's harbour in Newfoundland, when Sir Humphrey Gilbert took possession of the island for Queen Elizabeth I. (I know this fact because I grew up in a house five minutes' walk from there). But that was what historians now call the "first British empire."

That empire was based on settling colonists on various coasts and islands, mostly in North America. Where sugar could be grown, it also involved buying slaves in Africa and transporting them to the new world. But that first empire lost 90 per cent of its population when the American colonies won their independence in 1783, and for some time afterwards the whole idea of empire was quite unpopular in Britain.

The "second British empire," the one shown on old maps where much of the world is coloured pink, was mostly acquired in the 19th century, after Britain was already the world's greatest

industrial power. It covered huge chunks of Africa, Asia and the Middle East, but it didn't really last very long. By 1975, it was almost all gone, except for Hong Kong — and now that is gone too. What remains is the "permanent empire": the bits and pieces too small to want independence, and where the people often think of themselves as "British" even though they live many thousands of kilometres away. They are almost all remnants of the "first" empire.

It is hardly surprising, as these are places that have had lots of time to get into the habit of being British. Bermuda was settled in 1612. St. Helena became a crown colony in 1659, and Gibraltar was captured from Spain in 1704. Pitcairn Island, in the South Pacific, was settled by the "Bounty" mutineers in 1790.

The Falkland Islands, which only formally became a British colony in 1833 (though there was a British base there as early as 1765), are a relative newcomer in this company. But it was the Falklands that forcibly reminded Britain of its remaining empire in 1982, when Argentina invaded.

The British Foreign Office has been trying to unload the islands on Argentina for years, as they were economically unrewarding and had lost all strategic importance. The 2,000-odd Falklanders did not like the idea, but that sort of thing has never troubled the mandarins at the Foreign Office.

As a face-saving measure, Britain was proposing a sale-and-leaseback deal that would let Argentina claim sovereignty over the Falklands in return for an utterly obscure Argentine nationalistic, while leaving the English-speaking Falklanders under British administration until a new generation got used to the idea of being Argentine. The Falklands would have been in Argentine hands today if Buenos Aires had not jumped the gun and invaded.

It was done by a beleaguered Argentine military junta desperate for a military success to restore its fortunes. Instead, it gave

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher a chance to revive her fading popularity by driving the Argentine troops out.

It was the slimmest of chances, for the campaign to recover the Falklands was an ultra-long-distance war fought on a shoestring. The islands are 12,000 kilometres from Britain and only 450 kilometres from Argentina, and many of the ships Britain used would have been scrapped in another year or two. One Argentine torpedo in the right place at the right moment could have ended the whole campaign, and with it Thatcher's career.

Britain won its last colonial war, and the Falklands are now undergoing an economic renaissance. The British troops there call the place "Death Star" because it is such an alien environment and so far from home, but Darth Vader is nowhere in evidence.

The population is growing again after decades of slow decline, the economy is booming, thanks to expanding fisheries and oil exploration, and the modern world has arrived. The Falklands got television in 1994, and in Port Stanley there is even a barmaid with a pierced nose.

None of the rest of the "permanent empire" is likely to cost Britain any blood — not even Gibraltar, though Spain does have a permanent claim against it. Most of the 30,000 Gibraltarians crammed onto the rocky peninsula speak Spanish at home, but they are virtually unanimous in wanting to keep their British citizenship — and the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 ceded Gibraltar to Britain "in perpetuity and absolutely."

Spain will never use force, and it hasn't a moral leg to stand on so long as it maintains its own sovereignty over two comparable enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, on the Moroccan coast, opposite Gibraltar. In these post-imperial times, it is no longer seen as an intolerable insult to the national honour if a peninsula or island along your coastline belongs to another country. Sweden does not fuss about the Aland islands

being ruled by Finland, even though most people there speak Swedish. Canada never complains about the French-ruled islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon off the coast of Newfoundland, though there is a good deal of haggling over fishing rights. And the French are positively saintly about the British-ruled Channel Islands off the coast of Normandy.

So Gibraltar is safe, and Argentina is unlikely to mount another attack on the Falklands — and the rest of Britain's imperial detritus is not even near anybody else's coast.

The jewel in the crown is Bermuda, a mid-Atlantic island whose 40,000 people enjoy a higher per capita income than the British themselves by serving up a heritage-Britain-in-the-sun to American tourists: cars on the left, tea at four, and policemen dressed as bobbies. It is a good life for most people, and the Bermudians are simply not interested in independence: in a 1995 referendum, they voted overwhelmingly to keep the British link.

That same determination is evident in the Turks and Caicos Islands, Montserrat, the Cayman Islands and Anguilla. Britain's remaining island possessions in the Caribbean. It is certainly evident in the South Atlantic island of St. Helena. But they also have a common complaint: the callous decision in London that took away their British citizenship.

The resentment is most acute in St. Helena, once described as "a lost county of England." The 6,000 "Saints" who live there are strongly loyal to Britain, but their resentment at perceived injustices at the hands of the British government is so acute that last year the governor, David Smallman, was attacked in his office.

The crux of the problem is the 1981 Nationality Act, a cynical piece of legislation designed to deprive the 6 million residents of Hong Kong of their existing right, as British subjects, to go and live in Britain. It created a different passport for

residents of "Dependent Territories" that conferred no right of abode in Britain — and to avoid accusations of racism, Britain applied it to all the little island territories as well.

For the "Saints," who have a 1673 royal charter declaring that "natives of St. Helena and future generations should be given full citizenship rights as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England," it was rank betrayal. It was also one of the misleading signals from London that triggered the Argentine invasion of the Falklands in 1982.

After the Falklands war, Britain restored the citizenship rights of Falklanders and Gibraltarians, the two groups facing foreign claims on their territory. All the others hope that they will also recover their rights now that Hong Kong is gone, but they may be disappointed.

"It really would be seen as highly cynical if we waited until sovereignty over Hong Kong had passed to China and then granted British citizenship to the remaining dependent territories," said Baroness Symons, under-secretary at the Foreign

Office, early this month. "That is a remark of staggering cynicism — itself, given the roots of the Foreign Office's present policy, but it is quite typical of Britain's attitude towards its imperial remnants."

All the other European states that once ruled globe-spanning maritime empires — France, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands — have also ended up with orphaned bits that have nowhere else to go. In every case, they have tried to include these far-flung remnants of empire in the systems of the mother-country. France has even granted full citizenship and voting rights to several million people living in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

Britain's approach is colder and meaner, even though its "permanent empire" has only one-tenth the population of France's.

The 19th-century British historian, Sir John Seeley, once wrote that "we seem, as it were, to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind." The remnants of the empire will receive the same tender care and attention.

LETTERS

Thanking for concern

To the Editor:

ON BEHALF of the families of the Filipino workers in Jordan, I wish to thank Karen Asfour for her help and concern, as shown in her letter "Help for the helper" (Jordan Times, June 21, 1997) which I had the chance to read since I am currently visiting Amman.

I was pleasantly surprised to know that Ms. Asfour spent all this time and effort to seek justice for these unfortunate people who are being abused and deprived of their basic human rights in her country.

A heartfelt thank you to Ms. Asfour for her concern with my countrymen and may God bless her for her good work and dedication to justice, human rights and freedom.

Mahmud Ka
Salalah, 211,
Oman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Row with Israel

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Researcher offers ancient rocks as further proof of life on Mars

By Carolyn Thompson
The Associated Press

MIDDLEPORT, New York — A researcher says textured rocks picked up from the shore of Lake Ontario could strengthen the case for life on Mars by weakening earlier theories about rocks photographed on the red planet.

The earth rocks picked up by Barry Digney are a striking resemblance in the pictures of Martian rocks returned by the Viking space landers more than 20 years ago.

So similar are they, Mr. Digney and others say, that it is possible the two

sets of rocks got their Swiss cheese appearance in the same way — by hungry little worms and clams burrowing their way through millions of years ago.

"I'm not saying this is definite proof, I'm saying it is photographic evidence of trace fossils" on Mars, said Mr. Digney, an exhibit developer at the Buffalo Museum of Science with a degree in laboratory science technology.

The rocks found recently by Mr. Digney are left-overs from an era 500 million years ago, before the glacial retreat exposed the earth's continents and scattered debris in its wake.

Mars, 498 million kilometers away, may have seen a similar scenario, Mr. Digney said.

The rocks he found and those photographed by the second Viking probe both exhibit tracks and trails like those left behind by multi-cell marine organisms. Like the earth rocks, those photographed on the red planet appear to be sedimentary, meaning layers built up over time.

Until now, most scientists concluded that the reddish Martian rocks were volcanic matter, textured by gases escaping the cooling lava.

Mr. Digney had studied the 1,000 Viking photos for four years before making his find while researching the winter survival skills of lichens.

"After looking at the Viking images for so long, it just clicked," he said.

"They're just dead fingers for each other," said Dr. Gilbert Levin, a principal investigator on one of four life science experiments flown on the Viking missions. His experiments with the Viking probes indicated the presence of organic matter on Mars, but others concluded just the opposite.

"There are still a lot of people that hold very strongly that life on Mars is a nonsensical idea," said Dr. Richard Hoover, an astrobiologist at the NASA Marshall Space Flight Centre in Huntsville, Alabama. But he said more and more evidence is indicating otherwise.

He pointed to NASA's announcement in August that chemical and microscopic tests of a rock from Mars found in Antarctica detected organic compounds deposited in such a way that they could have come only from biological activity.

The Mars pathfinder mission launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, is expected to reach Mars on July 4 and provide the most detailed photos yet of the red planet's surface, though neither it nor a second spacecraft en route to Mars contains life-detection experiments.

"It might be one of the most exciting periods for the space programme we've ever had," Dr. Hoover said. He is chairing a conference of the International Society for Optical Engineering July 29-Aug. 1, the topic of which is how to proceed in future searches for extraterrestrial life.

Levy's row with Israel's premier holds up reshuffle

(Continued from page 1)

It's time to do the considering and the soul-searching," Mr. Levy told reporters at his ministerial office.

Mr. Levy, who is officially in charge of negotiations with the Palestinians, is bidding after being kept in the dark about a meeting between hardline Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian National Authority (PNA) number two Mahmoud Abbas.

The foreign minister's aides said Mr. Levy believes the meeting was sanctioned by the prime minister's office to inject a new sense of pragmatism into efforts to unblock the three-month freeze in peace talks with the Palestinians.

The Jerusalem daily said that U.S. Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross was involved in brokering the June 16 meeting between Mr. Sharon and Mr. Abbas.

Mr. Levy and Mr.

Netanyahu clashed last week over the expected appointment of Mr. Sharon to the post of finance minister, with a place inside the inner security cabinet that handles all discussions with the Palestinians.

The foreign minister was reassured that he would still be firmly in charge of the Palestinian portfolio, but his aides said he felt he had been knifed in the back by the secret Sharon-Abbas meeting.

Mr. Netanyahu initially said he would announce a cabinet reshuffle last week to fill the vacant science and finance portfolios, following the resignations of Likud Party members Benny Begin in January and Dan Mender in June.

After the dispute with Mr. Levy last week over Mr. Sharon's appointment to the inner cabinet, the announcement was delayed until Monday afternoon.

However, Mr. Sharon, a

hawkish ex-general, insisted Monday he would not back down in his demands.

"I will not agree to manage the treasury without being allowed to take part in the inner cabinet on the peace process," he told the Yedioth Aharonot daily.

Peace talks with the Palestinians have been frozen since March 18 when Israel began work on a settlement for 30,000 Jews in traditionally Arab east Jerusalem, and Mr. Sharon has said in recent days that he is the only person capable of breaking the impasse.

Intense negotiations were under way Monday to find a compromise to allow Mr. Levy to save face while at the same time allowing Mr. Sharon to take up his new cabinet position.

"I do not intend to worsen the conflict. I am interested in its conclusion and in full cooperation with the foreign minister," Mr. Netanyahu said Sunday.

Since he took up the post of foreign minister after Netanyahu's election victory in May last year, Mr. Levy

has repeatedly accused the premier of keeping him in the dark on major decisions involving the peace process.

Sources close to Mr. Levy said he was extremely upset by Mr. Netanyahu's behaviour, and that he was considering following Mr. Mender's example by resigning in protest at the prime minister's style.

The withdrawal of Mr. Levy's centrist Geshet Party from the government could spark a new election motion against Mr. Netanyahu in parliament, with the possibility of fresh elections.

Mr. Sharon has said he is prepared to meet Mr. Levy face-to-face to resolve the conflict, while both Mr. Netanyahu's Chief of Staff Avigdor Lieberman and State President Ezer Weizman have offered to mediate between the two men.

However, the seemingly divisions within the government have already inflicted a heavy toll on Mr. Netanyahu, with polls showing his approval rating is now at its lowest ebb since he took office.

Cypriot president in Greece to draw up bicomunal talks strategy

NICOSIA (AFP) — Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides left Monday for Athens, where he and Greek leaders will draw up a strategy for upcoming talks with Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş.

Mr. Clerides was quoted as saying on state radio before he left that he and Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis would discuss "the strategy of handling the Cyprus question, given the fact that Greece will be in the wings of the talks."

"We will not discuss any changes of our positions," he added.

Mr. Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot, and Mr. Denktaş are scheduled to meet July 9 to 13 in the U.N.-sponsored talks at the Troutbeck resort in New York. It will be their first meeting in three years.

Mr. Clerides, who is

accompanied by Foreign Minister Yanakis Cassoulidis and government spokesman, Manolis Christofides, is scheduled to return to Nicosia Wednesday.

Turkey has occupied the northern third of Cyprus since 1974 following a coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the Mediterranean island with Greece.

The Turkish-Cypriot leadership declared a breakaway republic in 1983, but the entity is recognised only by Ankara which maintains 35,000 troops there.

Repeated U.N. efforts to reunite Cyprus have foundered in disputes over the nature of a proposed federal government.

Aziz says Iraq clean, attacks U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

of Kuwait in 1990, was not permanent, and would be closely reviewed after the overall sanctions review in October.

"We are not going to accept this temporary arrangement to be enduring. Resolution 986 states that this is a temporary arrangement. We hope that in the coming few months for the lifting of the sanctions according to Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 will be addressed," Mr. Aziz said.

Limited Iraqi oil sales are due to resume once an aid distribution plan is approved by the U.N., a process other Iraqi officials expect to be sewn up in the next 10 days, allowing restarted liftings from mid-July to early August.

The oil accord allows Iraq to sell \$2 billion worth of crude over a 180-day period, to buy food and medicine for suffering civilians, and pay U.N. and Gulf war costs. The scheme originally ran from December 10 to June 7, and was renewed for a second round from June 8, but delays have thwarted new oil contract signings.

For six years, the U.N. and Iraq have had on-again, off-again disputes over weapons inspections, with the latest row in early June, when Mr. Ekeus claimed his teams were harassed when seeking to enter sensitive sites.

That led to the Security Council warning Baghdad to allow full inspection access, and stripping Iraq

of regular sanctions reviews until October, with an implicit threat for more sanctions if there was no improvement.

Mr. Aziz was in New York for the U.N. Earth Summit and to drum up support for lifting sanctions. He also met Mr. Butler, the Australian diplomat who assumes control of UNSCOM from July 1.

Mr. Ekeus has said he suspects Iraq sees the turnover in UNSCOM leadership as an opportunity to drive a wedge in the Security Council and soften support for maintaining sanctions.

Mr. Aziz strongly reiterated charges that the United States has worked to deny Iraqi civilians aid relief, and accused Washington of refusing to allow lifting of Gulf war sanctions to create economic benefits for it and ally Saudi Arabia.

"The U.S. is benefiting from the imposition of sanctions on Iraq. Iraq has been denied to export its share of its OPEC oil. The share of Iraq was shifted to another nation, that is Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is signing huge contracts with the American government and American business," Mr. Aziz said.

Palestinians close stores...

(Continued from page 1)

The city last week raided eight stores and several homes, confiscating property in lieu of unpaid taxes, Palestinian officials said.

Holding placards saying "Stop raiding our homes and shops" and "Israeli taxation means only transfer," some 60 Palestinians demonstrated outside the Old City in Arab east Jerusalem.

Almost all shops were shuttered in observance of a commercial strike called by Palestinian officials to protest the taxes.

The controversy reflected growing tension in Jerusalem over the future of the eastern sector of the city that Palestinians claim as their capital.

Palestinians are already enraged over Israeli construction of a new Jewish settlement in the city's eastern sector, where bulldozers broke ground in March, bringing Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations to a halt.

The fate of the city of 422,000 Jews and 180,000 Palestinians is the toughest issue for long-delayed talks on a permanent peace agreement, scheduled to be completed by May 1999.

"The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is planning to resist all Israeli measures in Jerusalem

including tax raids and confiscation of land, the building of settlements and house demolitions," said Palestinian Minister of the Islamic Trust Hassan Tibabouh.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said the protests were merely PNA attempts to undermine Israeli rule in the city.

"All the citizens in the city of Jerusalem, Jews and Arabs alike, have to pay taxes," Mr. Olmert said. "They are trying to ignore the authority of the government of Israel and the municipality by simply evading the payment of taxes."

"There is no political issue, there is simply a need to pay taxes. We are a government of law and we will enforce the payment of taxes," Mr. Olmert added.

But the Palestinian demonstrators warned that demonstrations would continue if Israel insisted on the payment.

"They are pouring oil on the fire," said Faisal Husseini, the top Palestinian official in Jerusalem.

"Today is taxes, yesterday was settlements," said merchant Ziad Hamouri, who owes 200,000 shekels in back taxes. "All these measures mean that Israel doesn't want peace."

Prince Charles hands over Hong Kong to China after 156 years of colonialism

(Continued from page 1)

Senior PLA commanders were greeted by saluting Hong Kong police and local and Chinese officials already in the territory.

The 509 troops, armed with pistols and rifles, then began their journey under police escort to different military bases.

Local villagers had strung up banners along their route saying "welcome PLA to Hong Kong."

The PLA raised the Chinese flag over all 14 military sites handed over from Britain at the stroke of midnight.

At the Prince of Wales barracks, the headquarters of the old British contingent, the Chinese national anthem was played out over the parade ground at the military handover.

Minutes earlier, the last strains of "God save the Queen" faded, and the last British troops, who had been lined up in neat rows facing their Chinese replacements, left the barracks.

After three PLA troops, one each from the navy, air force and army, had goose-stepped forward and raised the flag, PLA colonel Tian Xun said in a speech that it was a "great day" and the Chinese military was "very happy to come to Hong Kong."

"We will honour the principles of one country, two systems," he said, referring to Communist China's pledge to preserve Hong Kong's capitalist way of life.

Before the crossing, around 10,000 people had lined the streets of the Chinese border city of Shenzhen as the PLA gathered at the frontier. The crowds waved flags, flowers and balloons and cheered the troops. Some gave bouquets to smiling soldiers.

An advance party of 196 PLA men had arrived in Hong Kong over April and May to lay the groundwork for the military takeover.

Another 4,000 troops were due to cross into Hong Kong at 6:00 a.m. Tuesday by land, sea and air.

On Monday, China's President Jiang Zemin caused confusion when an order was published Monday for troops to "enter the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China and begin carrying out your duty of defence in Hong Kong at 0100, July 1, 1997."

However, a source from the new Hong Kong administration said Mr. Jiang's statement was a formality for the military change of command.

The source said the decree meant the PLA would be responsible for the defence of Hong Kong from the moment of the handover.

His departure had averted what some observers warned was an imminent coup by the military who regard themselves as the guarantors of the country's secular constitution.

The three groups were his pro-Islamist Welfare Party, Ms. Ciller's True Path Party, and the allied extreme right-wing Grand Union Party.

Mr. Erbakan's resignation ended a turbulent 12 months in power during which he enraged the military and some Western allies with pro-Islamic policies.

His departure had averted what some observers warned was an imminent coup by the military who regard themselves as the guarantors of the country's secular constitution.

Mr. Erbakan, who took office on June 28 last year after forging an alliance with Ms. Ciller, became the first Islamist prime minister of the Turkish republic, founded on secularism in 1923 on the ashes of the Ottoman empire.

Yilmaz approved as prime minister, poised to win deputy confidence

(Continued from page 1)

cabinet choices during a meeting earlier Monday with Mr. Demirel who had asked him to form a government after Mr. Erbakan's resignation on June 18.

Mr. Yilmaz pledged at the time not to include Islamists in his government.

Mr. Yilmaz had faced near-certain defeat in a parliamentary vote of confidence before a new wave of defections from Ms. Ciller's party. Now, he has mustered the

numbers to pass the vote in the 550-seat parliament by a margin of safety — and has achieved that through the steady weakening of the outgoing governing coalition.

Mr. Yilmaz said earlier he told Mr. Demirel that Turkey "needs a broad-based government to get the country out of this crisis." Foreign Minister Ciller was Mr. Erbakan's principal coalition partner, and had put herself forward to stand in for the outgoing premier with a view to holding fresh elec-

tions later this year. Following his resignation, Mr. Erbakan presented Mr. Demirel with a declaration from his coalition partners supporting Ms. Ciller's prime ministry.

The three groups were his pro-Islamist Welfare Party, Ms. Ciller's True Path Party, and the allied extreme right-wing Grand Union Party.

Mr. Erbakan's resignation ended a turbulent 12 months in power during which he enraged the military and some Western allies with

Randa Habib's corner

Of gifts to the 'gifted'

LET'S TALK about gifts today. Gifts you can accept, and gifts you should refuse. Gifts you are entitled to, and gifts that should not be.

I am not joking, believe me, this is a very serious matter.

Imagine that Jordan decides to create a body for government ethics, entrusted with controlling the misuse of government property and evaluating the legality of gifts received by public employees.

This office will decide whether wives of officials are entitled to use their husbands' official cars, and when. Or whether an officials' driver can drive his boss' children to school and buy groceries for his house, etc.

All these are self-designed gifts that many public employees think are rightfully due to them. In fact, they are not.

As for the gifts... I remember how stunned I was when I saw, a few years ago, some public figures proudly sporting brand new cars: gifts from the leader of a neighbouring country. And somehow I had the feeling I was one of very few who were shocked by what I saw.

I would not go as far as calling for the setting of a ceiling of \$25 (JD 17), as is the case in the United States, for "cadeaux" received by officials; in our case, let us start with an upper limit of, say, \$100.

Such a strictly heeded code of ethics should bar public employees from receiving unwarranted gifts.

Do you remember the Rolex masterpieces given to the leaders of G-8? Some of them found their way to a nice corner at national museums, and others were simply rejected.

We find illuminating stories in our heritage about ethics. Someone told me the other day about Caliph Omar Ben Abdul Aziz, in the seventh century, who was writing official papers under the light of a sole candle. When a man came to him for personal business, the Caliph blew the candle and lit another one that was his own property.

Germany's cybercops search for Internet crime

MUNICH, Germany (R) — Two young men in jeans and sweatshirts surf the Internet, looking for anything they can find in the way of child pornography.

They are not pervers or criminals. They are officers from Germany's only police department dedicated to Internet crime.

Dozens of confiscated monitors, hard disks and printers are piled up in a storeroom next door to the Munich office where the unit, under Commissioner Karlheinz Moewes, patrols the Worldwide Computer Network.

The equipment was seized in raids prompted by research on the Internet from Moewes and his five-strong team. It provides the officers with their other main task — trawling through the bits and bytes for illegal material to secure convictions.

"We had 110 cases of suspected child pornography in 1996," said Mr. Moewes, a burly, bearded Bavarian whose unit is on the lookout for Internet crime of all sorts.

"We find evidence of fraud, banned gambling, right- and left-wing extremism, pornography — sadly, child pornography and even child pornography with animals," he said.

Bavaria, traditionally Germany's most conservative regional state but also a centre for hi-tech industry, has been at the forefront of efforts to clean up the Internet.

Munich prosecutors last month indicted the head of the German unit of U.S. Online Service Compuserve, accusing him of allowing users access to pornography, neo-Nazi material and games which glorify violence.

The Bavarian police set up a working group on hi-tech crime under Mr. Moewes in 1995, and the group was upgraded to a department in its own right at the beginning of this year.

While other German police forces have officers who search the net for crime when time allows, the Munich unit is the only one which is devoted full-time to the task.

But the global nature of the Internet often makes it difficult for Munich's cybercops to act on what they find.

Differing national laws on what constitutes pornography, on when a young person is no longer classed as a child, and on who is legally responsible for what is on the Internet all mean securing convictions is no easy task for Mr. Moewes and his team.

"When it comes to hardcore pornography, the difficulty for us is that much of what's illegal here in Germany is legal and normal in Scandinavia," Mr. Moewes said.

Although they pass on their research to the relevant authorities if the trail leads them abroad, the Munich police have had no word back on any resulting convictions.

"We've had reports from America where searches have taken place, but we have no information on any concrete results," said Elise Dising, head of the police department which carries out raids on suspects pinpointed by Mr. Moewes and his team.

Even in Germany, the law moves slowly. No convictions have yet been secured from last year's child pornography cases, although Mr. Moewes is hopeful he will soon have a few to show for his efforts.

The unit's job is also influenced by the normal constraints of how undercover police officers are allowed to operate.

The cybercops can hang around electronic "chat rooms" where computer users trade information and swap material, for example, but they cannot incite anyone to commit a crime. They must hope the users offer illegal material of their own accord.

"To take one example, we got to know someone via the Internet who offered us child pornography," Mr. Moewes recalled. The unit agreed on a rendezvous to pick up the material, then called in the undercover officers from Ms. Dising's department.

"Our colleagues went to the meeting point, where floppy disks with child pornography were handed over. They briefly viewed the disks, then searched the suspect's apartment and seized his computer," Mr. Moewes said.

In addition to "virtual stake-outs" of chat rooms, the team also uses key-word searches of the Internet to try to track down web sites containing illegal material.

During one such search, the team came across a web page which hit two of their main areas of investigation at once — a site plastered with swastikas and pornographic pictures.

Mr. Moewes has little time for the argument that his officers should not be snooping around cyberspace and that their investigations into the likes of child pornography infringe the basic right to freedom of expression.

"In each one of our cases, a child has been abused," he said. "No one talks about the rights of the children."

Lloyds Register ready to halt inspection at Aqaba if asked by the United Nations

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The chairman of the board of directors of Lloyds Register, Patrick O'Ferrall, said Monday that his firm is ready to stop its monitoring of Iraq-bound goods at the Kingdom's seaport if asked by the United Nations to do so.

"We are working in Aqaba in line with U.N. instructions. We have no choice in this matter and we are not doing anything to the world body," Mr. O'Ferrall said in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times.

He said that no Jordanian official has contacted him to discuss the Jordan Clearance Association's complaints on the activities of Lloyds Register in Aqaba.

Mr. O'Ferrall, who arrived

here Sunday to meet with Jordanian shippers and industrialists, added that his firm would continue its work "until we are told that our activities are inappropriate and we have to leave."

His comments followed a severe criticism by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali who demanded in May an end to the activities of the London-based firm in Aqaba.

The premier said that following the oil-for-food agreement, reached last December between Iraq and the U.N., inspection of Iraq-bound goods should be conducted within Iraqi territories and not in Aqaba. Dr. Majali emphasized that the inspection inside Iraq would ensure that banned items do not enter the sanctions-hit country.

"Lloyds is still inspecting the entrance of goods to Jordan,

We request, at least, the removal of this obstacle from our path in Aqaba. This inspection should come to an end," Dr. Majali said on May 19.

Lloyds' inspection in Aqaba replaced a U.S.-spearheaded maritime inspection imposed following the seven-month-old Gulf crisis following the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The head of Jordan Clearance Association, Salim Jadoun, said that despite the complaint submitted by Jordan to the United Nations, the inspection did not stop and Lloyds was not only inspecting the Iraq-bound goods, but also goods that are imported for local consumption and for reexport. "The situation has not changed. The inspection of containers is still practised by Lloyds monitors. We have complained to the Chamber of Commerce but nothing has

changed so far," said Mr. Jadoun, adding that a complaint was sent by the foreign ministry to the U.N. to demand the immediate halt of Lloyds activities in Jordan.

He said the continuous inspection causes delay and adds losses to clearance companies in the Kingdom.

According to the agreement reached with the United Nations, the Kingdom was forced to pay for the cost of Lloyds inspection activities in southern Jordan.

The Ports Authority which is now handling this matter, in return levies a certain fee from the shippers and clearance companies to compensate for the amount paid to Lloyds.

"This puts additional expenses on the shoulders of the shippers and clearance companies," Mr. Jadoun emphasized.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING SECTOR SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 30/06/1997									
PART 12 MONTHS HIGH	PART 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
169,000	112,000	ARAB BANK	11.5	0.00	1	2330	534240	252.00	2.00
2,340	1,600	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	0.00	0.00	45	2400	52900	2.10	0.03
5,500	4,100	CATCO JORDAN BANK	11.8	0.00	2	300	2855	5.45	0.27
1,600	2,700	BANK OF JORDAN	6.9	0.00	8	2833	9339	3.30	0.10
1,210	860	HIG. EAST. TEL. CO.	61.1	0.00	12	4650	1225	93	0.00
2,460	2,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. CO.	8.3	0.00	9	54360	124150	2.30	0.01
5,200	4,260	THE JORDANIAN BANK	25.1	0.00	54	257570	281395	5.04	0.02
4,180	2,440	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	12.0	0.00	5	14800	55302	3.77	0.00
1,050	780	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	5.2	0.00	7	400	348	88	0.01
4,050	3,480	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	14.6	0.00	4	886	2109	3.60	0.01
1,800	1,110	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	20.2	0.00	1	150000	475000	3.18	0.01
2,400	2,000	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	12.3	0.00	4	1050	1177	1.12	0.01
2,640	1,000	SEIT. AL-HAL (SEITRA)	7	0.00	1	1050	1177	1.12	0.01
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 194.83 CHG: -0.76									
2,250	1,600	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	4.7	0.00	1	50	84	1.70	0.03
2,200	1,620	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.9	0.00	2	350	714	1.94	0.10
3,010	2,100	JORDANIAN ELEC. & TEL. CO.	11.7	0.00	4	1050	6321	5.50	0.28
6,170	4,840	AL-KHAYR AL-AMMAN	11.7	0.00	4	1050	6321	5.50	0.28
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 113.32 CHG: -1.35									
1,820	1,460	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	7.9	0.00	12	17482	20082	1.64	0.01
1,940	1,320	INDUS. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	6.2	0.00	12	150	207	1.38	0.02
6,100	4,100	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	14.0	0.00	8	1990	1718	5.23	0.10
810	480	JORDANIAN ELEC. & TEL. CO.	25.5	0.00	8	6001	2599	5.50	0.02
1,910	1,170	HIG. EAST. TEL. CO.	19.4	0.00	6	850	1176	1.34	0.07
3,170	2,090	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.6	0.00	6	1550	6459	2.90	0.11
2,210	1,620	UNIFIED CO.	7.9	0.00	6	1350	2367	1.67	0.02
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 108.02 CHG: -0.47									
4,480	3,040	JOR. CHEMIST FRANCH.	27.5	0.00	51	45968	269781	4.09	0.01
4,140	2,710	JOR. PROSPERITY MINES	11.0	0.00	6	17048	67335	3.94	0.05
7,050	4,950	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.4	0.00	3	2700	17880	6.67	0.02
2,240	1,680	INDUSTRIAL CONG. AGR.	0	0.00	3	6500	11550	1.70	0.02
4,000	3,040	ARAB PHARM. IND.	10.6	0.00	12	4351	15631	3.61	0.06
7,250	5,650	JOR. CHEMIST FRANCH.	27.5	0.00	51	45968	269781	4.09	0.01
1,680	1,120	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	2	450	509	1.18	0.05
6,650	4,250	ARAB ALUMINA CO. IND.	12.5	0.00	12	10950	71635	5.55	0.02
1,900	1,450	LIFESECT & POLYESTER	9.7	0.00	15	9100	4667	1.47	0.01
1,780	1,320	NATIONAL INSUR.	0	0.00	7	5000	2650	5.23	0.01
1,310	980	INTERMED. PRIND. CHEM.	0	0.00	8	8900	4918	1.68	0.01
1,090	860	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	0	0.00	1	10000	5600	5.60	0.01
950	550	JOR. SULPHUR-CHINA	0	0.00	4	4500	2530	5.60	0.01
1,610	1,120	ARAB PHARM. IND.	17.6	0.00	12	1500	2508	1.37	0.01
2,210	1,270	UNIV. WOOD. IND.	0	0.00	25	10100	12479	1.27	0.01
1,110	780	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	14.9	0.00	1	1450	1410	1.12	0.01
1,120	830	JOR. ELEC. & TEL. CO.	13.4	0.00	3	510	462	1.83	0.01
2,050	1,420	SE. JAV. READY WEAR	52.1	0.00	2	350	519	1.51	0.01
1,120	1,080	INTL. TEBACCO	6.0	0.00	18	24500	24500	1.05	0.01
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 127.24 CHG: -0.36									
1,120	1,080	INTL. TEBACCO	6.0	0.00	18	24500	24500	1.05	0.01
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 156.66 CHG: -0.51									
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 30/06/1997									
670	410	JOR. TRADE FAC.	12.0	0.00	9	5850	2524	4.45	0.01
840	680	ORION INV. SOI	0	0.00	2	1366	401	6.6	0.01
640	370	ARAB PTH. IND.	0	0.00	7	8250	2538	4.7	0.01
950	720	AL-SHARQ INV. 751	0	0.00	1	250	131	7.0	0.01
950	610	AL-DALALIYAR 751	60.5	0.00	16	27600	10488	6.2	0.01
810	520	JOR. TEL. MATCH-TECO	0	0.00	9	2400	1000	2.40	0.01
730	510	ARAB FOOD & WED.	0	0.00	6	1181	438	5.5	0.01
720	440	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	2	450	509	1.18	0.01
790	400	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	2	450	509	1.18	0.01
950	710	JORDAN ELEC.	33.0	0.00	3	1100	602	7.3	0.01
1,220	860	ORION CORPORA 751	0	0.00	6	8250	2538	4.7	0.01
890	550	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	2	450	509	1.18	0.01
600	270	INDUS. ELEC.	25.2	0.00	1	4500	1692	1.37	0.01
950	270	INDUS. ELEC.	0	0.00	3	46	23	2.27	0.01
1050	590	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	1	250	162	6.4	0.01
1,020	790	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	0	0.00	22	12812	17991	8.6	0.01
810	530	HIG. EAST. COMPLEX	6.0	0.00	13	13750	6638	6.6	0.01
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 156.66 CHG: -0.51									

1: New 12 months high
2: New 12 months low
3: Listed during the past 12 months
4: P/E ratio 100 or more
5: Negative P/E
6: Turning the face or S/A for the most recent year

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF	ESP
US Dollar	-	1.7415	0.6013	1.4580	114.85	1.3820	1700.00	1.9588	5.6670
DE Mark	0.5742	-	0.3440	0.8354	68.94	0.7951	975.61	1.1247	3.3683
GB Sterling	1.6830	2.8930	-	2.4081	190.45	2.2983	2827.10	3.2575	9.7588
CH Franc	0.6873	1.10.81	0.4127	-	78.92	0.9482	1167.58	134.88	4.0295
JP Yen	0.0087	1.5150	0.5228	1.2658	-	1.2023	14.79	170.40	5.1040
CA Dollar	0.7236	1.2383	0.4304	1.0310	1.20	-	1205.88	1.3900	4.1675
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0241	0.3534	0.8856	1481.82	0.8127	-	11.62	3.4502
NL Guilder	0.5106	88.86	0.3068	74.27	58.39	0.7062	867.44	-	2.9937
FR Franc	0.1704	0.2967	0.1024	24.7913	19.56	0.2355	33.38	33.3800	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BHD	KWD	AED	LYD	EGP	YER
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6398	0.3022	3.6728	1636.50	3.3830
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2972	0.5324	5.1418	0.4288	5.1677	2168.79	4.7924
GB Sterling	0.2666	0.1848	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0806	0.98	408.42	0.9047
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8781	9.9488	-	8.66	8.6016	9.74	4071.27	8.0007
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0830	1.01	421.86	0.9322
Kuwait Dinar	3.3096	2.3432	12.4124	1.2478	12.45	-	12.16	5081.91	0.9322
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0211	0.9910	0.0823	-	418.06	0.9328
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4811	2.4425	0.2485	2.3704	0.1968	2.3920	-	2.2097
Egyptian	0.2947	0.2087	1.1053	0.1111	1.0727	0.0891	1.0625	452.55	-

Energy									
Oil	Unit	Price	Oil	Unit	Price	Oil	Unit	Price	Oil
Brent	18.48	18.06	Brent	18.48	18.06	Brent	18.48	18.06	Brent
WTI	19.38	18.82	WTI	19.38	18.82	WTI	19.38	18.82	WTI
Bonny	18.48	18.06	Bonny	18.48	18.06	Bonny	18.48	18.06	Bonny
Dubai	17.00	16.67	Dubai	17.00	16.67	Dubai	17.00	16.67	Dubai
UL Gas	178.00	178.00	UL Gas	178.00	178.00	UL Gas	178.00	178.00	UL Gas

Metal Prices			Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Metal	Bid	Offer	Period	1-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	Year	
Gold (oz's)	335	335.5	USD	5.61	5.69	5.80	5.90	6.00	
Silver (oz's)	4.71	4.73	GBP	6.48	6.84	7.06	7.03	7.06	
Platinum (oz's)	419	422	JPY	0.44	0.48	0.51	0.57	0.68	
AL (3 Months)	1573	1578	DEM	3.25	3.00	3.06	3.10	3.12	
CU (3 Months)	2416	2421	FRF	3.23	3.27	3.31	3.39	3.41	
Zinc (3 Months)	1433	1438	CHF	1.10	1.30	1.21	1.31	1.31	
Lead (3 Months)	628	629	ITL	6.77	6.72	6.66	6.48	6.37	
Ni (3 Months)	6880	6890							

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Copa America put out of its misery with Brazil win

LA PAZ (R) — The 1997 Copa America was finally put out of its misery Sunday, as Brazil beat Bolivia 3-1 in a final between the only two teams who really took it seriously.

Most of the other 10 countries took part under protest and their attitude was reflected by the soccer itself, with most matches turning into dreary encounters played in near-empty stadiums.

A few games came to life but heavy-handed policing by the host nation, malfunctioning showers, a diplomatic row over a flag, another display of Argentine bad temper and an attempt to move the goalposts overshadowed the action — or lack of it — on the field.

The South American Football Confederation (CSF), which organises the event, argued that its competition was the victim rather than the cause of an overweight fixture list.

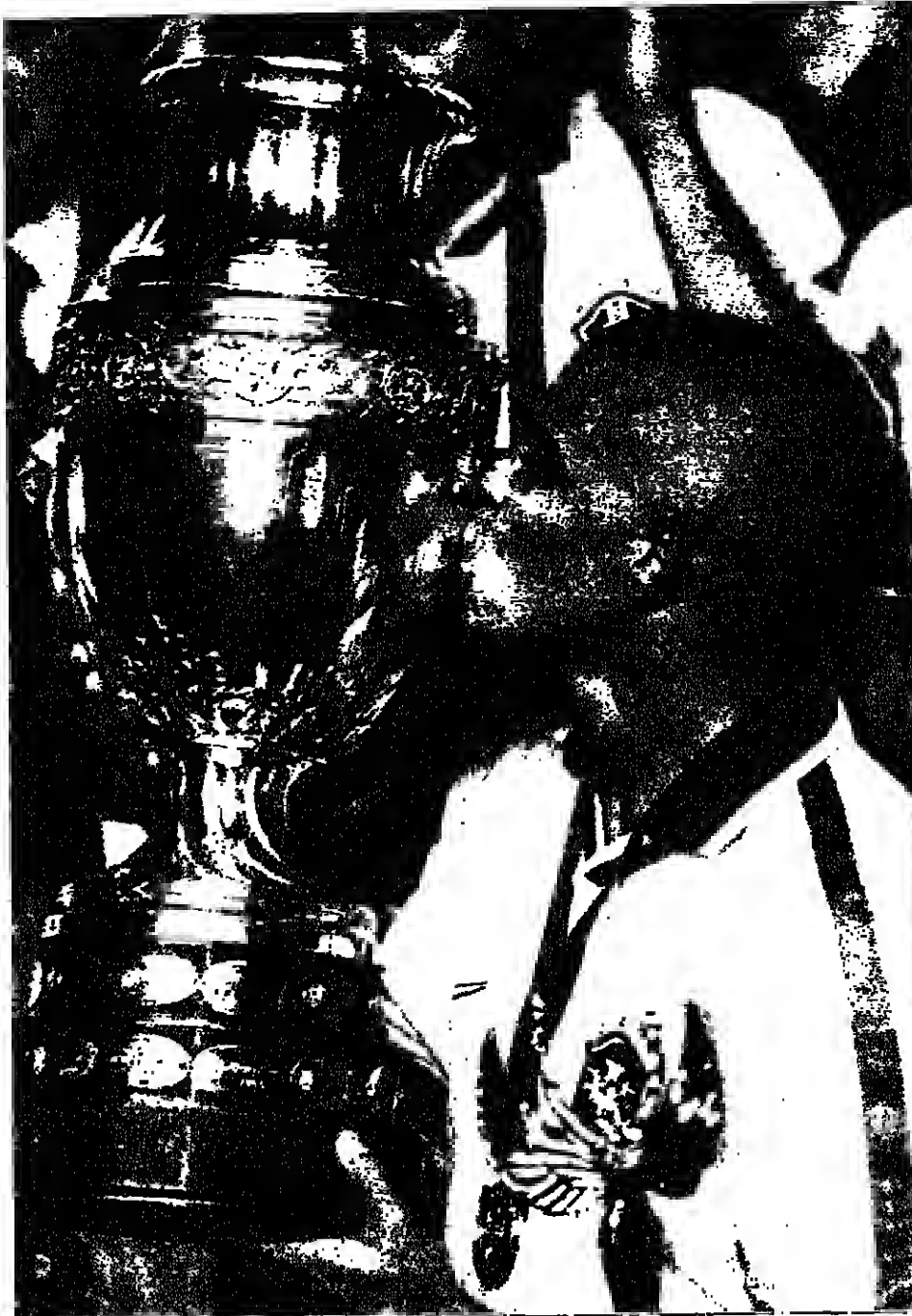
Jorge Barraza, the CSF's spokesman, said the competition had been set up 10 years ago while the marathon South American World Cup qualifying competition, which involves each South American country playing 16 matches in 18 months, had been arranged less than two years ago.

Barraza said the national federations, with the backing of world soccer's governing body FIFA, had wanted the new-look World Cup qualifiers. But it was the Copa America, squeezed in between World Cup qualifiers, that suffered as most teams concentrated on reaching France next year.

Argentina were one of the most reluctant guests and like Chile, Uruguay, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and Colombia chose to give their top players a rest.

Argentina's initial reluctance turned into a walk-out threat after they became victims of the organisers' attempt to change the rules.

Having finished second in their first round group, Argentina were supposed to play their quarter-final against the second-placed team in Group B in Sucre, which at 2,700 metres above sea level is roughly



Brazil's soccer star Ronaldo kisses the Copa America Cup after his team defeated Bolivia 3-1. Brazil won its first South American title since 1989 (Reuters photo)

the same height as Cochabamba, Argentina's first round venue.

Hours before Argentina's final first round game, however, the organisers announced that if Bolivia turned out to be their quarter-final opponent, the match would be switched to La Paz at 3,600 metres above sea level.

Coach Daniel Passarella threatened to take his team back to Buenos Aires rather than La Paz, his players backed him up and the crisis was inadvertently stopped by the hosts, who finished top of Group B.

Instead, Argentina went

on to disgrace themselves in a 2-1 quarter-final defeat by Peru.

Argentina finished with eight players after having three sent off, two of them following a fight which began because Peru goalkeeper Miguel Miranda would not give them the ball after they had converted a penalty.

Chile were equally unwilling protagonists, especially after an opening ceremony when organisers produced a Chilean flag that was missing its large white star. The team refused to walk behind the flag and the incident sparked a protest from the Santiago government.

After losing their first match 1-0 to Paraguay, the Chileans found they had no hot water in their dressing room. The players had to take cold showers on an evening where, because of Cochabamba's altitude, temperatures were only slightly above freezing.

Chile joined Venezuela, Uruguay and Costa Rica as the four first round losers, while Paraguay, Ecuador and Colombia departed in the quarter-finals along with Argentina.

Paraguay goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilaven still made his mark when he scored from a penalty in the first round game with Argentina and saved one from Brazil's Ronaldo as Paraguay were beaten 2-0.

The outspoken Paraguayan captain, however, failed to find his touch with his trademark free kicks, though he did claim to have received an offer to play as a kicker for an NFL team.

Eyebrows were also

raised when Argentina were awarded four penalties in two matches. Remarkably, in each game midfielder Marcelo Gallardo missed the first and scored from the second.

The most controversial refereeing was saved for Bolivia's 3-1 semi-final win over Mexico.

Mexico had a penalty turned down and claimed Bolivia's equaliser had not crossed the line, that the free kick from which Bolivia scored their second goal had been wrongly awarded and that their defender Claudio Suarez had been wrongly sent off.

Most controversial of all, however, was the way in which Mexico coach Bora Milutinovic, one of the most placid people in the game, was surrounded by riot police during the protest which followed Bolivia's equaliser.

Brazil, who as world champions qualify automatically for the World Cup next year, were able to bring all their multi-million dollar stars and not surprisingly provided most of the high spots.

Their 3-2 win over Mexico in the first round, after they had trailed 2-0, was one of the best games seen anywhere this year. And in their semi-final, they hammered seven goals past the hapless Peruvians.

In the final, they succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of playing at 3,600 metres above sea level to beat Bolivia 3-1. Brazil were clearly suffering from the thin air but never gave in, hanging on grimly as Bolivia pressed in the second half and then hit the hosts with two late goals.

Samaranch seeks final guarantees on Hong Kong

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong's future in international sport is assured but its name is not, Olympic supremo Juan Antonio Samaranch said Monday.

The International Olympic Committee president is in Hong Kong for the handover and to get final guarantees from Chinese leaders about the territory's participation in international events.

He said there were issues to be finalised such as the name and emblem to be used by Hong Kong and its competitors at the Olympics, Asian Games and other events. China wants the new special administrative region (SAR) to compete as "Hong Kong, China," but many sports leaders in the territory oppose this. It also wants the Bauhinia flower which is on Hong Kong's new flag to be the emblem.

A deal is expected to be struck under which teams will be called Hong Kong, China but an emblem featuring the Bauhinia will only carry the words "Hong Kong," China's national anthem will be used.

"The IOC's main priority is that the youth of Hong Kong continue to take part in major games and competitions around the world as an autonomous National Olympic Committee," the Spaniard said.

"There is no threat of any kind to Hong Kong's future autonomy as a separate NOC," he insisted.

Samaranch was to meet Hong Kong's future leader Tung Chee-hwa and fly to Beijing on Tuesday to meet Chinese sports officials before returning Wednesday to make what his aides said would be "an important announcement."

The IOC had to broker a complicated deal so Taiwan

could compete in Olympics as Chinese Taipei when mainland China was recognised.

Samaranch has said he expects this transition to be "much smoother."

Hong Kong has one of the wealthiest sporting movements in Asia but has not made the impact on the sporting world to match its economic power.

The territory's first Olympic title was won by windsurfer Lee Lai-Shan at the Atlanta Olympics last year.

Lee has returned from studies in Australia to attend the handover. "As a Chinese I am very happy about the return," she said of the historic occasion.

Hong Kong has also invested heavily in bringing in mainland swimming coaches, with China's medal world record holder Lin Li the latest to arrive this month.

One of the major handover events is a football match on Thursday between a FIFA all stars side and an Asian all stars team. Samaranch and FIFA President Joseph Blatter are to attend.

But the handover could see a steady decline in Hong Kong's fortune as a competitor and venue for international events.

The Hong Kong rugby sevens has been a major draw for more than two decades but is at risk if there is a large-scale expatriate withdrawal.

The government has just introduced a law banning tobacco sponsorship and advertising which threatens major events such as the ATP Hong Kong Open and the Marlboro Championship which offers one of the biggest prizes for an exhibition event.

Robson demoted, Van Gaal confirmed as coach

BARCELONA (AFP) — Dutchman Louis Van Gaal was Monday confirmed as the new coach of Spanish soccer powerhouse Barcelona, with current coach Bobby Robson given the job of director of recruitment.

The demotion comes as a slap in the face for Robson, the former England manager who this season led Barcelona to victory.

Robson, formerly manager of Ipswich, PSV Eindhoven, Sporting Lisbon and Oporto, must now decide whether to accept his new post, or look elsewhere for another job.

Van Gaal, formerly coach of Dutch club Ajax Amsterdam, has signed a three-year contract with Barcelona and arrived in the Catalan capital on Sunday.

Robson had a winning farewell, leading Barcelona to a 3-2 victory over Real Betis on Saturday night in the Spanish Cup final in Madrid. It was Barca's 23rd Spanish Cup win.

Carlos Rexach, the Barcelona reserve team coach, will be Van Gaal's assistant.

Barcelona president Josep Luis Nunez said Robson's current assistant, Jose Mourinho, would join him as assistant in his new post in charge of recruitment and transfers, while former Betis coach Lorenzo Serra Ferrer will take charge of the Barcelona reserve team.

"The role I will play next year is still an important role," said Robson, "but I have placed the bar at a very high point for the man who takes over. He will have a job bettering what I have done here."

Robson, who has turned down offers from Newcastle United and Everton in recent months and still is being sought by Scottish club Celtic, said he had accepted Barca's decision to employ Van Gaal and his new role.

Could ear chomping spell end of Tyson's career?

LAS VEGAS (R) — Is it the end for Mike Tyson?

After being disqualified from their title fight Saturday night for biting both of Evander Holyfield's ears, a chorus of condemnation rained down on the man who a decade ago became the youngest world heavyweight champion at the age of 20.

"I think he's just written his final passage in boxing," said venerable boxing historian Bert Sugar. "That's it, goodbye Mike."

"I am very disappointed and ashamed of Mike Tyson. He is maybe something that everyone has said: An immature kid who has never grown up and never will," Sugar opined.

Joe Hawk, boxing columnist of the Las Vegas Review-Journal called for Tyson to be banned from the fight game forever after the shocking display.

"Mike Tyson must never fight again," he wrote Sunday. "Never. Under any conditions, in any setting, against any opponent."

The Nevada State Athletic Commission, which regulates boxing in the state, is holding an emergency meeting Tuesday to decide whether to fine him or suspend his license for Saturday's startling end to the eagerly-awaited rematch with Holyfield for the World Boxing Association heavyweight title.

The Nevada Legislature's Senate Judiciary Committee met Sunday morning and voted to amend its "unarmed combat legislation" which covers boxing. Under new rules, ear-biting will be banned and may result in a fine of up to 50 per cent of a fighter's purse. Up till now, they could only fine Tyson 10 per cent of his \$30 million pay-day.

Referee Mills Lane disqualified the challenger before the start of the fourth round after Tyson twice bit Holyfield's ears. The champion lost a small chunk from his right ear from the first bite and will have to undergo reconstructive surgery since doctors were unable to reattach the torn flesh.

Not only did Tyson bite his opponent, but after the disqualification, he had to be restrained from getting at Holyfield as a melee erupted in the ring.

"America's wolfman" made a mockery of the Marquis of Queensberry rules. He is one disturbed young man."



Mike Tyson

The champion's lawyer, Jim Thomas, said he has not ruled out filing charges for the ear-biting. If charged with assault, Tyson could be in violation of his parole following his jail term for rape.

The incident sparked a surge of creativity among newspaper headline writers. The Las Vegas Review-Journal referred to it as "The bite of the century" and the Los Angeles Times called the bout a "bite to the finish". Then there was the Calgary Sun's "Chomp Chomps Champ".

Boxing writers and insiders, who once hailed Tyson as one of the greatest when he captured the world title in 1986 with a combination of menace and a killer punch, questioned not only his boxing ability and sportsmanship, but also his mental stability.

"His life has been without a purpose, he is a fragmented personality," said Ferdie Pacheco, TV boxing analyst known as the "fight doctor," who suggested Tyson could "benefit from therapy."

Veteran Los Angeles Times columnist Jim Murray did not mince words about Tyson's display in the ring. "America's wolfman" made a mockery of the Marquis of Queensberry rules. He is one disturbed young man."

Evander Holyfield (R) tries to stop him and Tyson (L) in the second round of their fight at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Holyfield, 33, has four titles and has fought

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Greek playmaker Evangelos Coronios (C) goes for a basket as Lithuanian guard Mindaugas Timinskas (R) tries to stop him and Darius Lukminas looks on, during their basketball match in the second round of the Eurobasket 97 tournament in Girona. Greece beat Lithuania 73-66, and has four wins in four games (Reuters photo)



British athlete Linford Christie (L) is beaten by Canada's Donovan Bailey in the men's 150m event at the IAAF Grand Prix meet in Sheffield. Bailey won the event in a time of 15.01 seconds, with Britain's Ian Mackie finishing second and Christie third (Reuters photo)

Bailey cashes in on emphatic victory over Christie

SHEFFIELD (R) — Canadian Donovan Bailey was another 50,000 pounds (\$82,500) better off on Sunday after an emphatic victory over Linford Christie in a 150 metres winner-take-all race on Sunday.

While the race did not have the cachet of Bailey's 150-metre duel with American Michael Johnson in Toronto a month ago, the outcome left no doubt the Canadian is in tremendous shape a month before he defends his world 100 title in Athens.

Although the Olympic 100 metres champion was slow out of the blocks and third out of the bend, a daz-

zling turn of speed over the last 50 metres gave him victory in 15.01 seconds, the third fastest time ever over the distance.

Britain's Ian MacKie pipped Christie for second place in 15.25 seconds to his compatriot's 15.27 in a race featuring the four fastest men over the distance — those three and John Regis who finished sixth.

"It's not the money but the performance that counted and I was delighted with that," said Bailey.

It was the third time Christie, the 1992 Olympic 100 metres champion, had met Bailey over 150 metres in Sheffield, with Christie

winning the previous two races and setting the world best of 14.97 seconds two years ago.

But he was never in contention this time and said at trackside after the race, "that was rubbish. I ran rubbish. I am just too embarrassed to talk about it."

There were other notable performances in the Grand Prix meeting in the Yorkshire hill.

Briton Kelly Holmes broke four minutes for the 1,500 metres for the first time when she clocked 3:58.07, the fastest ever in Britain and the fastest in the world this year. It set her up perfectly for her assault on that title in Athens.

Another Olympic champion, Fernanda Ribeiro of Portugal, held off Gete Wami of Ethiopia and

FIFA to rule on Ronaldo move

ZURICH (R) — FIFA said on Monday it would decide if Brazilian striker Ronaldo was free to move from Barcelona to Internazionale.

Soccer's world governing body on Monday received an official request from Internazionale, along with 40 pages of documentation, supporting its claim to the world footballer of the year.

It will now be up to FIFA's players' status committee to decide whether the 20-year-old Brazilian is free to move to the Italian club after paying \$27.6 million to free himself from his contract with Barcelona.

No date has been set for the next meeting of the committee but FIFA spokesman Andreas Herren said it was likely an extraordinary meeting would be called because of the interest in the dispute between the two clubs.

"The bottom line is that the Ronaldo case is now in FIFA hands," said Herren.

Tottenham move in for Juninho

LONDON (R) — English Premier League club Tottenham have had a bid of 11 million pounds (\$18.3 million) accepted by Middlesbrough for their Brazilian midfielder Juninho, according to a report in the Sun newspaper on Monday.

The report said the figure was a club record and that negotiations with the player's father, Osvaldo, were underway.

Juninho, however, is understood to favour a move to Spain where he feels greater exposure on television in Brazil will increase his chances of making the national squad for the 1998 World Cup finals.

Tottenham, who sold England striker Teddy Sheringham to Premier League champions Manchester United last week, are also negotiating with Newcastle for another England man, Les Ferdinand.

Seles out of Wimbledon but vows 'I'll be back'

LONDON (AFP) — Second-seed Monica Seles crashed out of Wimbledon on an outside court and under grey, threatening skies on Monday — beaten in three sets by her third-round French opponent Sandrine Testud.

The American left-hander said after her defeat that she still believes she can win Wimbledon — the only major title missing from her collection.

"I still believe I can do it. If I didn't believe that I wouldn't be out there," said the 23-year-old after going down 0-6, 6-4, 8-6 to 23rd-ranked Testud in just under two hours.

The former World No.1, who spent over 27 months out of tennis after being stabbed on court in Hamburg in 1993, refused to criticise the decision by the tournament referee to stage her match on the tiny No. 3 court, which faces the main entrance to the centre-court complex.

"I'd never played on the outside court before but it was fine," she said. "I just focussed on the ball and the crowd were great."

The hundreds of spectators packed round the court and blocking the alleyways, had no idea of the shock that was coming.

Seles, who has admitted that problems in her private life have been affecting her attitude on and off court, looked to be steaming to an easy win when she ran through the first set in just 19 minutes — conceding just three points on serve.

But after making Testud look slow and flat-footed as she sent her blistering groundstrokes into space, she suddenly went off the boil.

"I need to close out these matches," said Seles sadly. "I tried to do that today but I wasn't able to."

The American is currently travelling without her father and coach Karolj Seles, who is being treated for stomach cancer back home in the United States. She has been under extra pressure from the British tabloid newspapers since her arrival.

Accused of being 'overweight and unfit' and photographed in unflattering outfits, Seles, the winner of nine Grand Slam singles titles, admitted that she wasn't in peak condition.

Although she is accompanied by her mother Esther and has been working with former tour pro Stefano Pescosolido of Italy, Seles has been phoning her father, who has been watching her matches on video films, several times every day to seek his advice.

She now intends to take a long break.

"My next tournament will be in Stanford, California at the end of July," she said.

Testud, who has never got further than the second-round in five previous visits to Wimbledon, now plays her 29-year-old Fed Cup teammate Nathalie Tauziat. Tauziat ended Judith Wiesner's last Wimbledon



France's Sandrine Testud celebrates her victory over number two seed Monica Seles of the U.S. at the Wimbledon tennis championships June 30. Testud won the match 0-6 6-4 8-6 (Reuters photo)



Britain's Tim Henman celebrates winning his match against Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands. Henman won the marathon match 6-7 6-3 6-2 4-6 14-12 (Reuters photo)

by coming back to score a 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 victory. The Austrian player says she will be retiring at the end of the year.

Another third-round winner was Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia, who defeated 25-year-old 55th-ranked Naoko Kijimuta of Japan in straight-sets.

Basuki, ranked 26th and always at home on grass — having reached the last-sixteen four times in six previous visits to the All England Club — scored a 6-3, 6-2 victory.

The 26-year-old Indonesian now plays Cambodian-born Patricia Hy-Boulais of Canada.

Hy-Boulais, a former Hong Kong Fed Cup player,

played her first match on centre-court and scored a 6-4, 6-2 win over 23-year-old Gala Leon Garcia of Spain.

But she was far from happy with the condition of the turf.

"I must say that the centre-court is really badly damaged. It changes the whole game," she said, although adding that she hoped she didn't have to return to the number 13 court.

"I hate court 13," said the superstitious Novotna, who struggled to beat Elena Likhovtseva of Russia there on Sunday.

"Everytime I play there I have very tough matches. I like to be on the main courts."

Ninth-seed Mary Pierce of France defeated Magui Serna 6-4, 6-3 to reach a rough fourth-round clash against Serna's Spanish compatriot Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

Eighth-seed Sanchez Vicario, the runner-up here for the last two years, needed just 45 minutes to beat Florencia Labat of Argentina 6-1, 6-2.

Maria Alejandra Ventu, 23, continued to rewrite the history books when she became the first player from Venezuela to reach the last 16.

Ventu, ranked a modest 136 and a qualifier, notched up a surprise 6-2, 7-5 win over the experienced Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria.

In the men's event, three-times champion and eighth seed Boris Becker brushed aside Mark Petchey of Britain in straight-sets 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 to move just one match away from a potentially explosive quarter-final against World No.1 Pete Sampras.

Three-time champion Sampras also had a one-sided win when he beat Byron Black of Zimbabwe 6-1, 6-2, 6-2 in just 71 minutes.

Becker now faces either moody ninth-seeded Marcelo Rios of Chile, better known as a clay-court specialist, or John Van Lortum of the Netherlands.

Sampras plays either compatriot Alex O'Brien or 16th-seeded Petr Korda of the Czech Republic.

Twelfth-seed Patrick Rafter, a semi-finalist at the French open earlier this month, reached a fourth-round showdown against fellow-Australian Todd Woodbridge by beating Belgian qualifier Christophe Van Garsse.

Rafter, 24 and ranked 17, scored a 7-5, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 victory but his opponent was handicapped by a groin injury.

Woodbridge, 26, defeated Alex Radulescu of Germany, a quarter-finalist in his first Wimbledon 12 months ago, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

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